

The Life of Baron Frederick Trenck

Containing His Adventures, and Cruel
and Excessive Sufferings During an
Imprisonment of Ten Years in the
Fortress of Magdeburgh



THOMAS HOLCROFT, FRIEDRICH TRENCK



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

JIM
METCALKE

The Life of Baron Frederick Trenck

You are holding a reproduction of an original work that is in the public domain in the United States of America, and possibly other countries. You may freely copy and distribute this work as no entity (individual or corporate) has a copyright on the body of the work. This book may contain prior copyright references, and library stamps (as most of these works were scanned from library copies). These have been scanned and retained as part of the historical artifact.

This book may have occasional imperfections such as missing or blurred pages, poor pictures, errant marks, etc. that were either part of the original artifact, or were introduced by the scanning process. We believe this work is culturally important, and despite the imperfections, have elected to bring it back into print as part of our continuing commitment to the preservation of printed works worldwide. We appreciate your understanding of the imperfections in the preservation process, and hope you enjoy this valuable book.

THE
LIFE
OF
BARON FREDERICK TRENCK;
CONTAINING
HIS ADVENTURES,
AND ALSO

HIS EXCESSIVE SUFFERINGS DURING TEN YEARS IMPRISONMENT

At the Fortress of Magdeburgh, by Command of
FREDERICK THE GREAT, KING OF PRUSSIA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH
BY THOMAS HOLCROFT.



ALBANY:
PUBLISHED BY J. MUNSELL, 78 STATE STREET.
1853.

INTRODUCTION.

Among all the heroes of imprisonment over whom the most of us have sighed in our childhood, none have made a deeper impression than the subject of this work. Besides his own memoirs, which we now present in a new form, several biographers, at different times, have found sufficient additional particulars of his eventful life from which to form several large volumes. The latest of these is Maj. Whittingham, who, in his *Personal Recollections of a Ten Months' Residence in Berlin*, published in 1849, says:

"Whilst a handsome young officer, he attracted the regards and won the affections of Frederick's youngest and favorite sister, the Princess Amelia, who was as much distinguished by her beauty and wit as by her exalted rank. Alas, she was also a philosopher like her brother. Her affections, therefore, had their full play in the absence of all religious restraint.

"D daß sie ewig grün zu bleibe,
Die schöne Zeit der jungen Liebe!"

Or,

"Oh! that ever fresh from below
The course of youthful love might flow."

"But Shakspeare has said that *that* course 'never did run smooth,' and the present case was no exception to the illustrious rule. The Great Frederick decidedly objected to his sister becoming Mrs. Trenck. He, at the same time, wished to avoid all scandal, and to combine these objects no time was to be lost. He therefore gave Trenck, who was his own aid-de-camp, strong hints to mind and mend his conduct. His hints were thrown away. Who that has been young himself can wonder at the young lieutenant's blindness and obstinacy? It is not every day

that a beautiful, witty and accomplished princess sacrifices every thing for the love of a simple gentleman. And was the favored object to risk nothing in return? The secret interviews continued, but were, in fact, no secret to the penetrating eye of an all-powerful king. Arrests for pretended military crimes were the next measures adopted to warn the lover and to protect the lady in spite of herself. But Trenck was no sooner freed from these restraints than he again flew for consolation to the arms of his illustrious mistress. A longer incarceration was next decreed. From this, however, Trenck made his escape, and fled to a town beyond the Prussian dominions. Therein his indignation against what he styled Frederick's tyranny, he soon forgot what he owed to one who had sacrificed for him every thing that the world holds dear. In his blind anger he irreparably injured his royal mistress.

He

'Robbed *her* of that which not enriched him,
And left *her* poor indeed.'

He had the audacity to display at a large dinner party the portrait of the Princess Amelia. Frederick could, therefore, no longer pretend ignorance of her conduct, nor endeavor to provide her with a suitable husband. Nothing but vengeance remained; and for this the imprudence of Trenck soon furnished the enraged monarch with an opportunity which he did not neglect. The rest is told by Trenck himself, who as regards the Princess Amelia, endeavors to atone by his silence in his book for his verbal garrulity. But it was too late; he had betrayed the secret; and his subsequently affected reserve was a work of supererogation.

"After the death of Frederick, and in the closing winter of their lives, the unhappy lovers again met; he a broken down old man, she an unusually plain old woman; for in her deep despair she had, while still young, purposely destroyed her beauty. The interview between them—they who had parted so young, so beautiful, so devoted to each other—must have been strange and affecting. She had always remained faithful to her absent or imprisoned lover; and this fact throws a redeeming grace over the weakness of her youth, and gives an additional interest to her misfortunes. Frederick, who respected his sister's abilities, was up to the period of his death kinder and more attentive to her than to any other member of his family. She, on the other hand, probably aware that he, after his own fashion, had acted all along for her advantage, returned his affection, and in her life of sorrow she appeared to have no other consolation than the fraternal kindness of one of the most cold-hearted beings who ever

existed. A more melancholy history is scarcely to be found even in the immortal fiction of genius."

We are not aware that the elaborate German and French biographies of Trenck have been translated, but the simple narrative of his own life which follows, is, as far as it goes, a faithful portraiture of his imprudence and obstinacy. Possessed of a remarkably fine person, a bodily strength almost Herculean, a good deal of talent, but a hot temper, his life was little else than a series of dangers without motive, and misfortunes scarcely deserving compassion.

He distinguished himself very early by his precocity; in his thirteenth year he was entered as a student of law and belles-lettres at the university of his native place, and passed the usual examination with great distinction. One year later, he fought a duel with one of the most celebrated swordsmen of Königsberg, whom he wounded and disarmed. In his sixteenth year, his kinsman, who was an officer in the Prussian service, took him to Berlin, where his birth and advantages of person recommended him to the king, Frederick the Great, who had a passion for "tall fellows," immediately appointed him cadet, and soon afterwards, having himself upon one occasion been surprised at the young man's talents, he promoted him to a cornetcy in his body guard, at that time considered the most splendid and gallant regiment in Europe. The king's favor and his own amiable manners procured him many friends at court, but at the same time excited envy and malice. Scarcely less eager of literary than martial renown, the young king was then striving to render Berlin one of the capitals of learning and science, by attracting men of that character to his court, and heaping honors upon them.

Trenck became, through the favor which he enjoyed, the acquaintance and the friend of Frederick's philosophers, Voltaire, Maupertius, and others, whose familiarity was little calculated to abate his native presumption. The distinction which he enjoyed presently blinded him to the imprudent point of aspiring to please the young princess Amelia, the pretty and indiscreet sister of that foolish Margravine of Barenth, whose absurd memoirs give us an account so curious of that old brute, the elder Frederick, and his doings; how he starved his children, beat the officers of his palace, and, to solace their starvation, banged his queen and progeny. One would not think this just the education to make princesses romantic; yet Amelia must either, in the ignorance in which she was kept, have read, what serves so admirably to deepen the ignorance of young ladies, novels, or the learned company her brother afterwards kept, infected her with liberalism,

and she encouraged Trenck until the silly catastrophe, told by Major Whittingham, was brought about.

The foundation of his cruel fate is said to have been laid at a ball given at the royal castle at Stettin, in celebration of the marriage of the king's eldest sister to the king of Sweden. It was here that the princess Amelia is said to have noticed him, to have invited him to see her at her private apartments, and to have cherished a violent passion for him ever afterwards. In an unguarded moment he is said to have boasted of the favors shown him by his royal mistress. This was reported to the king, who, although he did not think proper to punish his indiscretion, took a decided dislike to him, and watched every opportunity of visiting him most severely for trifling faults in military discipline. This story, embellished with many romantic incidents, originates principally with French writers, who in many instances contradict themselves as to dates and other matters. That an imprudent attachment between Trenck and the princess existed, can not be doubted; but that Frederick, violent and passionate as he was, in all his private concerns, should have pretended blindness in so important a matter, and should have continued to bestow favors upon a man who had dishonored his sister's name, is difficult to credit.

It would be supererogatory to attempt to forestall the narrative by a recapitulation of the principal events in the life of Trenck; it is only proposed to present a brief outline of what seems to have been settled upon by subsequent writers of his eventful history, tending to give a more intelligent understanding of his own account of himself.

During the war between Prussia and Austria he was placed on the king's staff, and distinguished himself on several occasions, particularly when his cousin, Franz Trenck, attempted to take the king prisoner by surprise at Collin. A short time afterwards his cousin addressed him a letter, returning him some of his horses, which had been captured in a foraging expedition. This circumstance he mentioned in presence of Col. Jachinsky, who owed him a considerable sum of money, and who at Berlin was known to be his secret enemy. This man artfully persuaded him to a correspondence with his cousin in the Austrian service, he himself undertaking to forward the letters by means of his mistress, the wife of the Saxon resident, Madame de Bossart. Several letters passed in this way open, through Jachinsky's hands, until he got one in which some highly imprudent expressions were found, which he immediately caused to be laid before the king. The result was that Trenck was immediately cashiered and sent prisoner to the fortification of Glatz; not by a formal sentence,

but by an order from the king, who expressed his intention at the time to keep him there for one year; evidence enough, it would seem, that he only meant to punish his correspondence with the enemy, and no other or greater crime. At first he was treated according to his rank, and with all possible indulgence; but when it was discovered that he had several times, by bribes, attempted and nearly effected his escape, he was placed in close confinement. On the 24th December, 1746, he nevertheless succeeded in making his escape, by the assistance of and together with Major Schell. With great fatigue and danger he reached his mother's residence in Brandenburg, whence he proceeded to Vienna, amply furnished with money. A strict investigation was ordered by the king, for the purpose of finding out how he had effected his escape; the result of which was the discovery that large sums had been remitted to him by the princess Amelia. It is highly probable that this was the first time that Frederick knew of his sister's attachment, and from this period must be dated his intense and obdurate hatred of Trenck. In the mean time Trenck had got into fresh troubles at Vienna, which he himself principally attributes to the intrigues of his cousin Franz, notwithstanding he was in prison at the time on a criminal charge.

He left Vienna in disgust, went to Russia, where, through the recommendation of the English ambassador (to whom Frederick himself had introduced him at Berlin, under the flattering title of *Metador ma jeunesse*), he was well received, and appointed captain of a troop of hussars. Here he might have lived peaceably and content, being in high favor with the empress, and having acquired considerable wealth through a legacy of a Russian princess; but the Prussian ambassador, Count Goetz, left nothing undone to injure him, pretending that he acted thus in accordance with instructions from the king his master.

His cousin at Vienna, who died in 1749, had made him his heir. Upon this he determined to leave Russia; and after having visited Sweden, Denmark and Holland, he returned to Vienna to take possession of his inheritance. Fresh difficulties awaited him there. His cousin's estates were under sequestration, and after vexatious and expensive suits he agreed to a compromise, by which he received 75,000 florins and the appointment of a captaincy in a regiment of hussars.

In 1758 he had the folly to go to Dantzic, in order to settle there, with his family, the patrimony left by his mother, lately dead. Philosopher Frederick, besides being one of the least forgiving of mankind, was in the habit of keeping his eyes open, and had by no means lost sight of his fugitive ex-favorite. Trenck re-

ceived some hints of his impending danger, and was on the point of embarking for Sweden, when he was seized by a party of hussars, and taken to Berlin. He was at first treated well, but his intemperate language hurried on his fate, and he was sent to Magdeburg to cultivate an acquaintance with mice and spiders, which were to be his chief society for many a year.

His sufferings, and his bold, desperate and almost successful attempts to escape, may be read in his own memoirs. The king had determined that he should never be set free while he lived, and after two soldiers had suffered death for conniving at his attempts to regain his liberty, and several other plots had been discovered, a prison was at last built on purpose for him, in which he was chained to the walls with fetters of sixty-seven pounds weight. Here he remained four years, when the intercession of his relatives, and those of Amelia too, it is presumed, succeeded in softening Frederick's obduracy, and on the 24th of December, 1763 (some authorities say 1774), he was released upon condition of leaving the kingdom.

He seems next to have fixed himself at Aix-la-Chapelle, where he married the daughter of one of the burgomasters. This might seem incongruous; but if one levels up to princesses, why not down to a burgomaster's daughter? It was here, probably, that he wrote the story of his captivity. Indeed he dabbled in several things beside biography, for he had soothed in part his confinement by writing verses—a vice which once contracted is seldom wholly recovered from; dabbled in politics; published a satire against Frederick under the title of *The Macedonian Hero*; entered into the wine trade, and set up for a newspaper writer. This pleasant diversity of occupations ended, rather naturally, in a sort of bankruptcy. After this new misfortune, he wrote articles of rather a democratic tendency for several periodicals. He also obtained from the kindness of Maria Theresa some diplomatic employment and a pension for his wife. At the death of the empress he retired to his castle at Zwarback, in Hungary, where he occupied himself for some six years in agricultural pursuits. In 1787, after the death of Frederick the Great, he published his memoirs, for the copy right of which he received a very large sum. From that time he became a distinguished man in the world. His book was translated into almost all European languages; the ladies at Paris, Berlin and Vienna wore rings, necklaces, bonnets and gowns, *a la Trenck*, and not less than seven different theatrical pieces, in which he was the hero, were brought out on the French stage.

In the following year, after an exile of forty years, he was allowed to revisit Prussia, and once more to see his ancient in-

amorata. Time and suffering had in the mean time made Amelia wise. It is singular indeed, what opposite effects may flow from the same cause; reading the romances in which other folks are actors, makes one sillier and sillier; but acting a tragic novel of our own makes us sadly wise. Not even that, however, can make every body wise; Trenck himself must have still been as light-brained as ever; whence the inference is fair that he had suffered comparatively little, and that his love of the princess was no affair of the heart. At any event, incorrigible by either duels, or philosophy or dungeons, or wine-selling, or farming, or getting broke, or even turning newspaper editor (which more than any thing else, cures one's illusions), Trenck next, at above the age of sixty, took a fancy, it was to be his last, for a revolution.

Although he was kindly received at Berlin, by the successor of the great Frederick, it seems that he was disappointed in his expectations; for he returned to Aix-la-Chapelle, where he commenced the publication of a weekly paper called *L'Ami des Hommes* (the friend of men), in which he proclaims himself a friend of the new French doctrines. The first consequence of his publication was a loss of the pension which the empress had given to his burgo-baroness. Next came a renewal of his old diversion of going to prison. This time, however, he had not to deal with philosophic kings; so he was soon let out. Satiated, no doubt, of chains, he now resolved to go and take his fill of emancipation; he made his way in 1791 to Paris. Here, as one who had been so much a victim of despotism, he was received with delight. For his own part, being above any feeling of jealousy toward any rival reputation, he appears to have sought and contracted a very particular intimacy with Latude, the man who had been thirty-five years a prisoner in the Bastile. He joined a Jacobin club, and was afterwards a zealous adherent of the Mountain party; but in 1793, on his offering to lead against the Prussian refugees and republicans, he was suspected of being a Prussian spy. No doubt he would have been equally suspected if his conduct had been just the opposite. He was thrown into his old mansion, a prison; but there being no proof found of his being a spy, they accused him of entering into some plot in his dungeon, and brought him to the guillotine on the 25th of July, 1794. Yet on the scaffold, and in his sixty-eighth year, he gave proofs of his ungovernable passions. He harrangued the surrounding multitude, and when his head was on the block, he once more attempted to give utterance to his vehemence, and the executioner had to hold him by his silver locks to meet the fatal stroke. He was still as strong, it is said, and as fresh as a man of thirty.



THE LIFE

OF

BARON FREDERICK TRENCK.

I was born in Königsberg, in Prussia, February 16, 1726, of one of the most ancient families of the country. My father, a knight of the military order, lord of Great Scharlack, Scharckulack and Meicken, and major-general of cavalry, died in 1740, after having received eighteen wounds in the Prussian service. My mother, descended from the house of Derschau, was daughter of the president of the high court at Königsberg. She had two brothers, generals of infantry, and a third, minister of state and postmaster-general at Berlin. After my father's death in 1740, she married count Lostonge, lieutenant-colonel in the Kiow regiment of cuirassiers, with whom, leaving Prussia, she went and resided at Breslau. I had two brothers and a sister. My youngest brother was taken by my mother into Silesia; the other was also a cornet in this last named regiment of Kiow, and my sister was married to the only son of the aged general Valdow, who quitted the service, and with whom she lived in Brandenburg on his estates.

My ancestors, both of the male and female line, are famous in the chronicles of the north, among the ancient Teutonic knights, who conquered Courland, Prussia and Livonia.

While a boy, I was enterprising in all the tricks of boys, and exercised my wit in crafty excuses; the warmth of my passions, then and afterwards, gave a satiric, biting cast to my writings,

whence it has been imagined, by those who knew but little of me, I was a dangerous man; though I am conscious this was a hasty and false judgment. I kept no vicious company; was never, during the whole course of my life, intoxicated; was no gamester, no consumer of time in idleness nor brutal pleasures; but devoted many hundred laborious nights to make myself useful to my country; yet I was punished with a severity too cruel even for the most worthless or most villainous.

I shall say little more of the first years of my life, except that my father, who had a tender affection for me, took special care of my education; sent me at the age of thirteen to the university at Königsberg, where, under the tuition of Kowalesky, my progress was rapid. There were fourteen other noblemen of the best families in the same house, and under the same master.

In November, 1742, the king sent his adjutant general, Baron Lotum, who was related to my mother, to Königsberg, with whom I dined at my grandfather's. He conversed much with me, and after various questions, meant to discover what my talents and inclinations were, he demanded, as if in a joke, whether I had any inclination to go with him to Berlin, and serve my country, as my ancestors had ever done. Inflamed with the desire of distinguishing myself, I listened with rapture to the proposition, and in a few days departed for Potsdam.

On the morrow after my arrival, I was presented to the king, as indeed I had before been, in the year 1740, with the character of being then one of the most hopeful youths of the university. My reception was most flattering; the justness of my replies to the questions he put, my height, figure and confidence, pleased him, and I soon obtained permission to enter as a cadet in his guards, with promise of quick preferment.

The body guard formed, at this time, a model and school for the Prussian cavalry. It consisted of one single squadron, of men selected from the whole army, whose uniform was the most splendid in all Europe. Two thousand rix dollars were necessary to equip an officer; the cuirass was wholly plated with silver; and the horse furniture and accoutrements, alone, cost four hundred rix dollars.

There are no soldiers in the world who undergo so much as this body guard; for during the time I was in the service of Frederick, I often had not eight hours sleep in eight days. Exercise began at four in the morning, and experiments were made of all the alterations the king meant to introduce in his cavalry. Ditches of four, five, six feet, and still wider, were leaped, till that some one broke his neck; hedges in like manner were freed, and his horses ran careers, meeting each other full in a kind of lists of more than half a league in length. We had often, in these our exercises, several men or horses killed or wounded.

I can not give a stronger picture of this service, than by saying that the body guard lost more men and horses in one year's peace, than during the following year they did in two battles.

I had scarcely been six weeks a cadet, before the king took me aside one day after the parade, and having examined me near half an hour on various subjects, commanded me to come and speak to him on the morrow.

His intention was to find whether the account that had been given him of my memory had not been exaggerated; and that he might be convinced, he gave me the names of fifty soldiers to learn by rote, which I did in five minutes. He next repeated the subjects of two letters, which I immediately composed in French and Latin: the one I wrote, the other dictated. He next ordered me to trace, with promptitude, a landscape from nature, which I executed with equal success; and he then gave me a cornet's commission in his body guards.

Thus did I remain a cadet only six weeks, and few Prussians can vaunt, under the reign of Frederick, of equal good fortune.

The king not only presented me with a commission, but equipped me most splendidly for the service. Thus did I suddenly find myself a courtier, and an officer in the finest, bravest and best taught corps in Europe. My good fortune seemed unlimited, when in the month of August, 1743, the King selected me to go and instruct the Silesian cavalry in the new manœuvres: an honor never before granted to a youth of eighteen.

I have already said we were garrisoned at Berlin during the

winter, where the officer's table was at court; and, as my reputation had preceded me, no person whatever could be better received there, or live more pleasantly.

I had hitherto remained ignorant of love, and had been terrified from illicit commerce, by beholding the dreadful objects at the hospital at Potsdam. During the winter of 1743, the nuptials of his majesty's sister were held, who was married to the king of Sweden, where she is at present queen dowager, mother of the reigning Gustavus. I, as officer of my corps, had the honor to mount guard and escort her as far as Stettin. Here did my heart first feel a passion of which in the course of my history, I shall have frequent occasion to speak. The object of my love was one whom I can only remember at present with reverence; and, as I write not romance, but facts, I shall briefly say, ours was mutually the first fruits of affection, and that to this hour, I regret no misfortune, no misery, with which, from a stock so noble, my destiny was interwoven. Amid the tumult inseparable to occasions like these, on which it was my duty to maintain order, a thief had the address to steal my watch, and cut away a part of the gold fringe which hung from the waistcoat of my uniform, and escaped unperceived. This accident brought on me the raillery of my comrades; and the lady alluded to thence took occasion to console me, by saying I should be no loser. Her words were accompanied by a look I could not misunderstand, and a few days afterwards I thought myself the happiest of mortals. The name, however, of this high born lady is a secret, which must descend with me to the grave; and though my silence concerning this incident leaves a void in my life, and indeed throws obscurity over a part of it, which might else be clear, I would much rather incur this reproach, than become ungrateful towards my best friend and benefactress. To her conversation, to her prudence, to the power by which she riveted my affections wholly to herself, am I indebted for the improvement and polishing of my bodily and mental qualities. She never despised, betrayed, or abandoned me, even in the deepest of my distress; and my children alone, on my death-bed, shall be taught the name of her to whom they owe the

preservation of their father and, consequently, their own existence.

I lived at this time, perfectly happy at Berlin, and highly esteemed. The king testified his approbation at every opportunity; my mistress supplied me with more money than I could expend, and I was presently the best equipped, and made the greatest figure of any officer in the whole corps. The style in which I lived was remarked, for I had only received, from my father's heritage, the estate of great Scharlack; the rent of which was only 800 dollars a year, which was far from sufficient to supply my then expenses. My amour, in the mean time, remained a secret from the best and most intimate friends. Twice was my absence from Potsdam and Charlottenberg discovered, and I was put under arrest; but the king seemed satisfied with the excuses I made, under the pretext of having been hunting, and smiled as he granted my pardon.

Never did the days of youth glide with more apparent success and pleasure, than during these my first year at Berlin. This good fortune was, alas! of short duration. Many are the incidents I might relate, but these I shall omit. My other adventures are numerous enough, without mingling such as may any way seem foreign to the subject. In this gloomy history of my life, I would paint myself to the world as I am, and by the recital of my sufferings afford a memorable example, and interest the heart of sensibility. I would also show how my fatal destiny has deprived my children of an immense fortune; and, though I want an hundred thousand men to enforce and ensure my rights, I will still show my heirs they are incontestible.

In the beginning of September, 1744, war again broke out between the houses of Austria and Prussia. We marched with all expedition towards Prague, traversing Saxony without opposition. I will not relate, in this place, what the great Frederick said to us, with evident emotion, when surrounded by all his officers, on the morning of our departure from Potsdam.

Should any one be desirous of writing the lives of him and his opponent, Maria Theresa, without flattery and without fear, let him apply to me, and I will relate anecdotes most surprising

FREDERICK
DOLLARS

on this subject, unknown to all but myself, and which never must appear under my own name.

Here I must recount an event that happened, which became the source of all my misfortunes. I must entreat my readers to pay the utmost attention to this, since the error, if innocence can be error, was the cause that the most faithful and the best of subjects became bewildered in scenes of wretchedness, and was the victim of misery, from his 19th to the 60th year of his age. I dare presume, this true narrative, supported by testimonies the most authentic, may fully vindicate my present honor, and my future memory.

FRANCIS, BABON OF TRENCK, was the son of my father's brother, consequently my cousin german. I shall speak, hereafter, of the singular events of his life. Being a commander of pandours in the Austrian service, and previously wounded in Bavaria, in the year 1743, he wrote to my mother, informing her he intended me, her eldest son, for his universal legatee. This letter, to which I returned no answer, was sent to me at Potsdam. I was so satisfied with my situation, and had such numerous reasons to be, considering the kindness with which the king treated me, that I would not have exchanged my good fortune for all the treasures of the great Mogyl.

On the 12th of Feb., 1744, being at Berlin, I was in company with Capt. Jaschinsky, commander of the body guard, the captain of which ranks as colonel in the army, together with Lieut. Studniz and Cornet Wagnitz. The latter was my field comrade, and is at present commander general of the cavalry of Hesse Cassel. The Austrian Trenck became the subject of conversation, and Jaschinsky asked if I was his kinsman; I answered, yes, and immediately mentioned his having made me his universal heir. "And what answer have you returned?" said Jaschinsky—"None at all."

The whole company then observed, that in a case like the present, I was much to blame not to answer; that the least I could do would be to thank him for his good wishes, and entreat a continuance of them. Jaschinsky further added, "Desire him

01/26/18

to send you some of his fine Hungarian horses for your own use, and give me the letter; I will convey it to him, by means of M. Bossart, legation counsellor of the Saxon embassy, but on condition that you will give me one of the horses. The correspondence is a family, and not a state affair; beside that, I will be answerable for the consequences."

I immediately took my commander's advice, and began to write; and had those who suspected me thought proper to make the least inquiry into these circumstances, the four witnesses, who read what I wrote, could have attested my innocence, and rendered it indubitable. I gave my letter, open, to Jaschinsky, who sealed and sent it himself.

I must omit none of the incidents concerning this letter, it being the sole cause of all my sufferings. I shall, therefore, here relate an event which was the first occasion of the unjust suspicions entertained against me.

One of my grooms, with two led horses, was, among others, taken by the pandours of Trenck.

When I returned to the camp, I was to accompany the king on a reconnoitering party. My horse was too tired, and I had no other; I informed him of my embarrassment, and his majesty immediately made me a present of a fine English courser.

Some days after, I was exceedingly astonished to see my groom return with my two horses, and a pandour trumpeter, who brought me a letter containing nearly the following words;

"The Austrian Trenck is not at war with the Prussian Trenck, but on the contrary, is happy to have recovered the horses from his hussars, and returned them to whom they first belonged, &c."

I went the same day to pay my respects to the king, who, receiving me with great coldness, said, "Since your cousin has returned you your own horses, you have no more need of mine."

There were too many who envied me, to suppose these words would escape repetition. The return of the horses seems infinitely to have increased that suspicion Frederick entertained against me, and therefore became one of the principal causes of my misfortunes; it is for this reason that I dwell upon such like small incidents, they being necessary for my own justification, and,

were it possible, for that of the king. My innocence is indeed at present universally acknowledged by the court, the army, and the whole nation, who all mention the injustice I suffered with pity, and the fortitude with which it was endured with surprise.

We marched for Silesia, to enter on our second campaign, which to the Prussians was as bloody and murderous as it was glorious.

I approach that epocha when my own misfortunes began, and when the sufferings of martyrdom attended me from my youth till my hairs grew gray.

A few days after the battle of Sorau, the usual camp postmen brought me a letter from my cousin Trenck, the colonel of pandours, dated at Essex, four months back, of which the following is a copy:

"Your letter of the 12th of February from Berlin, informs me you desire to have some Hungarian horses. On these you would come and attack me and my pandours. I saw with pleasure during the last campaign, that the Prussian Trenck was also a good soldier; and that I might give you some proofs of my attachment I then returned the horses which my men had taken. If, however, you wish to have Hungarian horses, you must take mine in like manner, from me in the field of battle, or should you think fit, come and join one who will receive you with open arms, like a friend and son, and who will procure you every advantage you can desire," &c.

At first, I was terrified at reading this letter, yet could not help smiling. Cornet Wagenitz, now general in chief of the Hesse Cassel forces, and Lieutenant Grothausen, both now alive, and then present, were my camp comrades. I gave them the letter to read; they laughed at its contents. It was determined to show it to our superior officer, Jaschinsky, on a promise of secrecy, and it was accordingly shown him within an hour after it was received.

The reader will be so kind as to recollect that as I have before said, it was this Col. Jaschinsky, who, on the 12th of February, the same year, at Berlin, prevailed on me to write to the Austrian Trenck, my cousin; that he received the letter open,

and undertook to send it according to its address; also, that in this letter I, in jest, had asked him to send me some Hungarian horses, and when they came, had promised one to Jaschinsky. He read the letter with an air of some surprise; we laughed, and it being whispered through the army, that in consequence of our late victory, detached corps would be sent into Hungary, Jaschinsky said, "We shall now go and take Hungarian horses for ourselves." Here the conversation ended, and I returned, little suspecting the future consequences, to my tent.

Jaschinsky was, at this time, one of the king's favorites; his spy over the army, a tale bearer, an inventor of lies and wicked calumnies. Some years after the event of which I am now speaking, the king was obliged to break and banish him the country.

He was then also the paramour of the beautiful Madam Bos-sari, wife of the Saxon resident at Berlin, and there can be little doubt but that this false letter, was, by her means, conveyed to some Saxon or Austrian post office, and thence according to its address sent to me. He had daily opportunities of infusing suspicions into the king's mind concerning me, and, unknown to me, pursuing his diabolical plan.

Further, we had quarrelled during our first campaign, because he had beaten one of my servants; we even were proceeding to fight with pistols, had not Colonel Winterfield interfered, and amicably ended our quarrel. The Lithuanian is by nature obstinate and revengeful; and from that day I have reason to believe he sought my destruction.

God only knows what were the means he took to excite the king's suspicions; for it is incredible that Frederick, considering his well known professions of public justice, should treat me in the manner he did, without hearing, without examination, and without a court-martial. This, to me, has ever remained a mystery, which the king alone was able to explain; he afterwards was convinced I was innocent; but my sufferings had been too cruel, the miseries he had inflicted, too horrible for me ever to hope for compensation.

A man of my rank, having once unjustly suffered, and having the power of making his sufferings known, must either be highly rewarded, or still more unjustly punished. My name and injuries will ever stain the annals of Frederick the Great; even those who read this book, will, perhaps, suppose I, from political motives of hope or fear, have sometimes concealed truth, by endeavoring to palliate his conduct.

It must ever remain incomprehensible, that a monarch so clear-sighted himself, the daily witness of my demeanor, one well acquainted with mankind, and conscious I wanted neither money, honor, nor hope of future preferment; I say it is incomprehensible he should really suppose me guilty. I take God to witness, and those who knew me in prosperity and misfortune, I never harbored a thought of betraying my country. How was it possible to suspect me? I was neither madman nor idiot. In my eighteenth year I was a cornet of the body guard, adjutant to the king, and possessed his favor and confidence in the highest degree. His presents to me in one year amounted to fifteen hundred dollars. I kept seven horses, four men in livery; I was valued, distinguished and beloved by the mistress of my soul. My relations held high offices, both civil and military; I was even fanatically devoted to my king and country, and had nothing to wish for.

That I should become thus wretched, in consequence of this unfortunate letter, is equally wonderful; it came by the public post. Had there been any criminal correspondence, my kinsman certainly would not have chosen this mode of conveyance, since it is well known all such letters are opened; nor could I act more openly. My colonel read the letter I wrote, and also that which I received, immediately after it was brought.

The day after the receipt of this letter, I was, as I have before said, unheard, unaccused, unjudged, conducted like a criminal from the army by fifty hussars, and imprisoned in the fortress of Glatz. I was allowed to take three horses and my servants, but my whole equipage was left behind, which I never saw more, and which became the booty of Jaschinsky. My commission was given to Cornet Shatzel, and I cashiered without knowing why.

There were no legal inquiries made; all was done by the king's command.

I once more repeat, I was brought to the citadel of Glatz; I was not, however, thrown into a dungeon, but imprisoned in a chamber of the officer of the guard, was allowed my servant to wait on me, and permitted to walk on the ramparts.

I did not want money, and there was only a detachment from the garrison regiment in the citadel of Glatz, the officers of which were all poor. I soon had both friends and freedom, and the rich prisoner every day kept open table.

He only who had known me in this the ardor of my youth, who had witnessed how high I aspired, and the fortune that attended me at Berlin, can imagine what my feelings were at finding myself thus suddenly cast from my high hopes. I wrote submissively to the king, requesting to be tried by a court martial, and not desiring any favor should I be found guilty. This haughty tone in a youth, was displeasing, and I received no answer, which threw me into despair, and induced me to use every possible means to obtain my liberty.

My first care was to establish, by the intervention of an officer, a certain correspondence with the object of my heart. She answered, she was far from supposing I had ever entertained the least thought traitorous to my country; that she knew too well I was perfectly incapable of dissimulation. She blamed the precipitate anger, and unjust suspicions of the king; promised me speedy aid, and sent me a thousand ducats. Had I, at this critical moment, possessed a prudent and intelligent friend, who could have calmed my impatience, nothing perhaps, might have been more easy than to have obtained pardon of the king, by proving my innocence; or, perhaps, than to have induced him to punish my enemies.

But the officers who were then at Glatz fed the flame of discontent. They supposed the money I so freely distributed came from Hungary, furnished by the pandour chest; and advised me not to suffer my freedom to depend upon the will of the king, but to enjoy it in his despite.

Five months soon passed away in prison; peace was con-

cluded; the king was returned to his capital; my commission in the guards was bestowed on another, when Lieutenant Piaschky of the regiment of Fouquet, and Ensign Reitz, who often mounted guard over me, proposed that they and I should escape together. I yielded, our plan was fixed, and every preparatory step taken.

At that time there was another prisoner at Glatz, whose name was Manget, by birth a Swiss, and captain of cavalry in the Natzmerschen hussars; he had been broken and condemned, by a court-martial, to ten years imprisonment, with an allowance of only four rix dollars per month.

Having done this man kindness, I was resolved to rescue him, also, from bondage at the same time with myself. I communicated my design, and made the proposal, which was accepted by him, and measures were taken; yet were we betrayed by this vile man, who thus obtained pardon and freedom.

Piaschky who had been informed that Reitz was arrested, saved himself by deserting. I denied the fact in presence of Manget, with whom I was confronted, and bribed the auditor with an hundred ducats. By this means, Reitz only suffered a year's imprisonment and the loss of his commission. I was then confined for having endeavored to corrupt the king's officers, and guarded with great caution.

Here I will interrupt my narrative a moment, to relate an adventure which happened between me and this Captain Manget, three years afterwards, that is to say, in 1749, at Warsaw.

I there met him by chance, and it is not difficult to imagine what was the salutation he received. I caned him; he took this ill, and challenged me to fight him with pistols. Captain Heucking of the Polish guards, was my second; I shot him through the neck at the first shot, and he fell dead on the field.

He alone, of all my enemies, ever died by my own hand; and he well merited his end for his cowardly treachery towards the two brave fellows of whom I have spoken; and still more so with respect to myself, who had been his benefactor; and I own I have never reproached myself for this duel, by which I sent a rascal out of the world.

I return to my tale. My destiny at Glatz was now become more untoward and severe. The king's suspicions were increased, as likewise was his anger, at my late attempt to escape.

Left to myself, I considered my situation in the worst point of view, and determined on flight or death. The length and closeness of my confinement became insupportable to my impatient temper.

I had always the garrison on my side, nor was it possible to prevent my making friends among them. They knew I had money, and in a poor garrison regiment, the officers of which are all dissatisfied, having most of them been drafted from other corps, and sent thither as a punishment, there was nothing that might not be undertaken.

My scheme then was as follows:—My window looked towards the city, and was ninety feet from the ground in the tower of the citadel, out of which I could not get, without having found a place of refuge in the city. This an officer undertook to procure me, and prevailed on an honest soap-boiler to grant me a hiding-place. I then notched my pen-knife and sawed through three large iron bars: but this was too tiresome a mode, it being necessary to file away eight bars from my window, before I could pass through; another officer procured me a file, which I was obliged to use with caution, lest I should be overheard by the sentinels.

Having ended this labor I cut my leather portmanteau into thongs, sewed them end to end, added the sheets of my bed, and descended safely from this astonishing height. It rained, the night was dark, and all seemed fortunate, but I had to wade through moats full of mud before I could enter the city, a circumstance I had never once before considered. I sunk up to the knees, and after long struggling, and incredible efforts to get out, I was obliged myself to call the sentinel, and desired him to go and tell the governor, Trenck was stuck fast in a ditch.

My misfortune was the greater on this occasion, because that General Fouquet was then governor of Glatz. He was one of the cruelest of men. He had been wounded by my father in a

duel; and the Austrian Trenck had taken his baggage in 1744, and also laid the country of Glatz under contribution. He was therefore an enemy to the very name of Trenck, nor did he lose any opportunity of giving me proofs of his enmity, and especially on the present occasion, when he left me standing in the mud till noon, the sport of the soldiers. I was then drawn out half dead, only again to be imprisoned, and shut up the whole day without water to wash me. No one can imagine how I looked, exhausted and dirty, my long hair having fallen into the mud, with which, by my struggling, it was loaded. I remained in this condition till the next day, when two fellow prisoners were sent to assist and clean me.

My imprisonment now became more intolerable. I had still eighty louis-d'ors in my purse, which had not been taken from me at my removal into another dungeon, and these afterwards did me good service.

The passions now all assailed me at once, and impetuous, boiling, youthful blood overpowered reason; hope disappeared; I thought myself the most unfortunate of men, and my king an irreconcilable judge, more wrathful and fortified in suspicion by my own rashness. My nights were sleepless, my days miserable; my soul was tortured by the desire of fame; a consciousness of innocence was a continual stimulus, inciting me to end my misfortune. Youth, inexperienced in woe and disastrous fate, beholds every evil magnified, and desponds upon every new disappointment, more especially, having failed in attempting freedom. Education had taught me to despise death, and these opinions had been confirmed by my friend La Metrie, author of the famous work, *L'Homme une Machine, or Man a Machine*.

I read much during my confinement at Glatz, where books were allowed me; time was therefore less tedious; but when the love of liberty awoke, when fame and affection called me to Berlin, and my baulked hopes painted the wretchedness of my situation; when I remembered my loved country, judging by appearances, could not but pronounce me a traitor; then I was hourly impelled to rush on the naked bayonets of my guards, by whom to me the way of freedom was barred. Big with such

like thoughts, eight days had not elapsed since my last fruitless attempt to escape, when an event happened which would appear incredible, were I, the principal actor in the scene, not alive to attest its truth, and might not all Glatz and the Prussian army be produced as eye and ear witnesses. This incident will prove that bold, and even rash daring, will render the most improbable undertakings possible, and that desperate attempts may often make a general more fortunate and famous than the wisest and best concerted plans.

Major Doo came to visit me, accompanied by an officer of the guard and an adjutant. After examining every corner of my chamber, he addressed me, taxing me with a second crime in endeavoring to obtain my liberty; adding this must certainly increase the anger of the king. My blood boiled at the word crime; he talked of patience; I asked how long the king had condemned me to imprisonment? He answered, a traitor to his country, who has corresponded with the enemy, can not be condemned for a certain time, but must depend for pardon on the king.

At that instant I snatched his sword from his side, on which my eyes had been fixed, sprang out of the door, threw the sentinel from the top to the bottom of the stairs; passed the guard, who happened to be drawn up before the prison door to relieve guard, attacked them sword in hand, threw them suddenly into surprise by the manner in which I laid about me; wounded four men, made my way through the rest, sprang over the breastwork of the ramparts, and, with my sword drawn in my hand, immediately leaped this astonishing height without receiving the least injury. I leaped the second wall with equal safety and good fortune. ¶None of the arms were loaded; no one durst leap after me, and in order to pursue they must go round through the town and the gate of the citadel; so that I had the start full half an hour.

A sentinel, however, in a narrow passage endeavored to oppose my flight, but I parried his fixed bayonet and wounded him in the face. A second sentinel, mean time, came from the outworks to seize me behind, and to avoid him I made a spring

at the palisadoes; there I was unluckily caught by the foot, and received a bayonet wound in my upper lip; thus entangled, they beat me with the butt end of their muskets, and dragged me back to prison, while I struggled and defended myself like a man grown desperate. Certain it is, had I more carefully jumped the palisadoes, and disabled the sentinel who opposed me, I might have escaped, and gained the mountains. Thus I might have fled to Bohemia, after having at noon day broke from the fortress of Glatz, sprung past all its sentinels, over all its walls, and passed with impunity, in despite of the guard, who were under arms ready to oppose me. I should not, having a sword, have feared any single opponent, and was able to contend with the swiftest runners. That good fortune which had so far attended me forsook me at the palisadoes, where hope was at an end. The severities of imprisonment were increased; two sentinels and an under officer were locked in with me, and were themselves guarded by sentinels without. I was beaten and wounded by the butt ends of their muskets, my right foot was sprained, I spit blood, and my wounds were not cured in less than a month.

I was now informed the king had only condemned me to a year's imprisonment, in order to learn whether his suspicions were well founded. My mother had petitioned for me, and was answered, "Your son must remain a year imprisoned as a punishment for his rash correspondence."

Of this I was ignorant, and it was said in Glatz my imprisonment was for life. I had only three weeks longer to repine at the loss of liberty, when I made this rash attempt. What must the king think? Was he not obliged to act with this severity? How could prudence excuse my impatience thus to risk a confiscation, when I was certain of receiving freedom, justification and honor, in three weeks? But such was my adverse fate, circumstances all tended to injure and persecute me, till at length I gave reason to suppose that I was a traitor, notwithstanding the purity of my intentions.

Once more, then, I was in a dungeon; and no sooner was I there, than I formed new projects of flight. I first gained the intimacy of my guards; I had money, and this with the com-

passion I had inspired, might effect any thing among discontented Prussian soldiers. Soon had I gained thirty-two men, who were ready to execute, on the first signal, whatever I should command. Two or three excepted, they were unacquainted with each other, consequently could not all be betrayed at a time; and I had chosen the under officer, *Nicholai*, to lead them. The garrison consisted only of one hundred and twenty men, from the garrison regiment, the rest being dispersed in the country of Glatz, and four officers, their commanders; three of whom were in my interest. Every thing was prepared; swords and pistols were concealed in an oven, which was in my prison. We intended to give liberty to all prisoners, and retire by beat of drum into Bohemia.

Unfortunately, an Austrian deserter, to whom *Nicholai* had imparted our design, went and discovered our conspiracy. The governor instantly sent his adjutant to the citadel with orders that the officer on guard should arrest *Nicholai*, and with his men take possession of the casement.

Nicholai was one of the guard, and the lieutenant was my friend, and being in the secret, gave the signal that all was discovered. *Nicholai* only, knew all the conspirators, several of whom were that day on guard. He instantly formed his resolution, leaped into the casements, crying, "Comrades to arms, we are betrayed?" All followed to the guard house, where they seized on the cartridges, the officer having only eight men, and threatening to fire on whosoever should offer resistance, came to deliver me from prison; but the iron gate was too strong, and the time too short for that to be demolished. *Nicholai* calling to me to aid them, but in vain; and perceiving nothing more could be done for me, this brave man, heading nineteen others, marched to the gate of the citadel, where there was an under officer and ten soldiers, obliged these to accompany them, and thus arrived safely at Brannau in Bohemia; for, before the news was spread through the city, and men were collected for the pursuit, they were nearly half way on their journey.

Two years after, I met with this extraordinary man at Osna-burg, where he was a writer: he entered immediately into my

service, and became my friend, but died some months after, of a burning fever, at my quarters in Hungary, at which I was deeply grieved, for his memory will ever be dear to me.

Now was I exposed to all the storms of ill fortune. A prosecution was entered against me as a conspirator, who wanted to corrupt the officers and soldiers of the king. They commanded me to name the remaining conspirators; but to these questions I made no answer, except by steadfastly declaring I was an innocent prisoner, and an officer unjustly broken; unjustly, because I had never been brought to trial.

Things thus remained; every precaution was taken, except that I was not put in irons; it being a law, in Prussia, that no gentleman or officer can be loaded with chains, unless he has first, for some crime, been delivered over to the executioner; and certainly this had not been my case.

The soldiers were withdrawn from my chamber; but the greatest ill was, that I had expended all my money, and my kind mistress at Berlin, with whom I had always corresponded, and which my persecutors could not prevent, at last wrote, "My tears flow with yours; the evil is without remedy; I dare say no more; escape if you can. My fidelity will ever be the same, when it shall be possible for me to serve you—adieu—unhappy friend—you merit a better fate." This letter was a thunder-bolt; my comfort, however, still was, that the officers were not suspected, and that it was their duty to visit my chamber several times a day, and examine what passed; from which circumstance I felt my hopes somewhat revive. Hence an adventure happened, which is almost unexampled in the lives of knight errantry.

A lieutenant whose name was Bach, a Dane by nation, mounted guard every fourth day, and was the terror of the whole garrison: for, being a perfect master of arms, he was incessantly involved in quarrels, and generally left his marks behind him. He had served in two regiments, neither of which would associate with him for this reason, and he had been sent to the garrison regiment at Glatz as a punishment.

Bach one day, sitting beside me, related how, the evening before, he had wounded a lieutenant of the name Schell in the

27/18

arm. I replied, laughing, had I my liberty, I believe you would find some trouble in wounding me, for I have some skill in the sword. The blood instantly flew in his face; we split off a kind of pair of foils from an old door which had served me as a table, and at the first lunge I hit him in the breast. His rage became ungovernable, and he left the prison. What was my astonishment when, a moment after, I saw him return with two soldiers' swords, which he had concealed under his coat. "Now then, boaster, prove," said he, giving me one of them, "what thou art able to do." I endeavored to pacify him, by representing the danger, but ineffectually. He attacked me with the utmost fury, and I wounded him in the arm. Throwing his sword down, he now fell upon my neck, and kissed me and wept. At length, after some convulsive emotions of pleasure, he said, "Friend, thou art my master; and thou must, thou shalt, by my aid, obtain thy liberty as certainly as my name is Bach. We bound up his arm as well as we could. He left me, and secretly went to a surgeon to have it dressed, and at night returned.

He now remarked that it was humanly impossible I should escape, unless the officer on guard should desert with me, that he wished nothing more ardently than to sacrifice his life in my behalf, but that he could not resolve so far to forget his honor and duty as to desert himself while on guard; he notwithstanding gave me his word he would find me such a person in a few days; and that in the mean time he would prepare every thing for my flight. He returned the same evening, bringing with him Lieut. Schell, and as he entered, said, "Here is your man." Schell embraced me, gave me his word of honor, and thus was the affair settled, and as it proved, my liberty ascertained.

We now began to deliberate on the means necessary to obtain our purpose. Schell was just come from garrison at Habelschwert to the citadel of Glatz, and in two days was to mount guard over me, till when our attempt was suspended. I have before said, I received no more supplies from my beloved mistress, and my purse at present contained only some six pistoles. It was therefore resolved, that Bach should go to Schweidnitz, and obtain money of a sure friend of mine in that city.

Here I must inform the reader, that at this time the officers and I all understood each other, Captain Roeder alone excepted, who was exact, rigid, and gave trouble on all occasions.

Major Quadt was my kinsman by my mother's side, a good friendly man, and ardently desirous I should escape, seeing my calamities were now so much increased. The four lieutenants who successively mounted guard over me, were Bach, Schroeder, Lunitz, and Schell. The first was the grand projector, and made all the preparations; Schell was to desert with me; and Schroeder and Lunitz, three days after, were to follow.

The talents of Schell were of a superior order; he spoke and wrote six languages, and was well acquainted with all the fine arts. He had served in the regiment of Fouquet; had been injured by his colonel, who was a Pomeranian, and Fouquet, who was no friend to well informed officers, had sent him to a garrison regiment. He had twice demanded his dismissal, but the king sent him to this species of imprisonment; he then determined to avenge himself by deserting, and was ready to aid me in recovering my freedom, that he might spite Fouquet. I shall speak more hereafter of this extraordinary man, that I may not in this place interrupt my story. We determined every thing should be prepared against the first time Schell mounted guard, and that our project should be executed on the next. Thus, as he mounted guard every four days, the eighth was to be that of our flight.

The governor had been informed how familiar I became with the officers, at which, taking offence, he sent orders that my doors should not be opened, but that I should receive my food through a small window that had been made for that purpose. The care of the prison was committed to the major, and he was forbidden to eat with me under pain of being broken.

His precautions were ineffectual; the officers procured me a false key, and remained with me half the day and night.

Beside my prison was that of Captain Dannitz. This man had deserted from the Prussian service with the men belonging to his company to Austria, where he obtained a commission in his cousin's regiment, who having prevailed on him to serve as a

spy during the campaign of 1744, he was taken in the Prussian territories, known, and condemned to be hanged.

Some Swedish volunteers, who were then in the army, interested themselves in his behalf, and his sentence was changed to perpetual imprisonment, with a sentence of infamy.

This wretch, who, two years after, by his protectors, not only obtained his liberty, but a lieutenant colonel's commission, was then the secret spy of the major over the prisoners; and he remarked that notwithstanding the express prohibition laid on the officers, they still passed the greater part of their time in my company.

The 24th of December came, and Schell mounted guard. He entered my prison immediately, where he continued a long time, and we made arrangements for flight when he next should mount guard. Lieutenant Schroeder that day dined with the governor, and heard orders given that Schell should be taken from the guard, and put under arrest. Schroeder, who was in the secret, had no doubt but we were betrayed, not knowing that the spy, Damnitz, had informed the governor that Schell was then in my chamber. Schroeder, full of terror, came running to the citadel, and said to Schell, "Save thyself, friend, all is discovered, and thou wilt instantly be put under arrest." Schell might easily have provided for his own safety, by flying singly; Schroeder having prepared horses, on one of which he himself offered to accompany him to Bohemia. How did this worthy man, in a moment so dangerous, act towards his friend?

Running suddenly into my prison, he drew a corporal's sabre from under his coat, and said, "Friend, we are betrayed, follow me, only do not suffer me to fall alive into the hands of my enemies." I would have spoken, but interrupting me, and taking me by the hand, he added, "follow me, we have not a moment to lose." I therefore slipped on my coat and boots, without having time to take the little money I had left, and as we went out of the prison, Schell said to the sentinel, "I am taking the prisoner into the officers' apartment; stand where you are."

Into this room we really went, but passed out at the other door. The design of Schell was to go under the arsenal which was

not far off, to gain the covered way, leap the palisadoes, and afterwards escape the best way we might. We had scarcely gone a hundred paces, before we met the adjutant and major Quadt. Schell started back, sprang upon the rampart and leaped from the wall, which was there not very high. I followed, and lighted unhurt, except having grazed my shoulder. My poor friend was not so fortunate, having put out his ankle; he immediately drew his sword, presented it to me, and begged me to dispatch him and fly. He was a small weak man, but far from complying with his request, I took him in my arms, threw him over the palisadoes, afterwards got him on my back, and began to run without very well knowing which way I went.

It may not be unnecessary to remark those fortunate circumstances that favored our enterprise.

The sun had just set as we took to flight; the hoar frost fell. No one could run the same risk we had done, by making so dangerous a leap. We heard a terrible noise behind us. Every body knew us; but before they could go round the citadel, and through the town, in order to pursue us, we had got a full half league. The alarm guns were fired before we were a hundred paces distant, at which my friend was much terrified, knowing that in such a case it was generally impossible to escape from Glatz, unless the fugitives had got the start full two hours before the alarm guns were fired, the passes being immediately all stopped by the peasants and hussars, who are exceedingly vigilant. No sooner is a prisoner missed, than the gunner runs from the guard house, and fires the cannon from three sides of the fortress, which are kept loaded day and night for that purpose.

We were not five hundred paces from the walls, when all before us and behind us were in motion. It was daylight when we leaped, yet was our attempt as fortunate as it was wonderful; this I attribute to my presence of mind, and the reputation I had already acquired, which made it thought a service of danger for two or three to attack me. It was, beside, imagined we were well provided with arms for our defence, and it was little suspected that Schell had only his sword, and I an old corporal's sabre.

- - - - -

Among the officers commanded to pursue us, was lieutenant Bart, my intimate friend. Captain Zerbat, of the regiment of Fouquet, who had always testified the kindness of a brother toward me, met us on the Bohemian frontiers and called to me, "Make to the left, brother, and you will see some lone houses, which are on the Bohemian confines; the hussars have rode straight forward." He then passed on as if he had not seen us.

We had nothing to fear from the officers, for the intimacy in the Prussian army was at that time so great, and the word of honor so sacred, that during my rigorous detention at Glatz, I had been once six and thirty hours hunting at Neurode, at the seat of the Baron Stillfriede; Lunitz had taken my place in the prison, which the major knew when he came to make his visit. Hence may be gathered how great was the confidence in which the word of the unfortunate Trenck was held at Glatz, since they did not fear letting him leave his dungeon, and hunt on the very confines of Bohemia. This shows the governor was deceived, in despite of his watchfulness and orders, and that a man of honor, with money and a good heart, will never want friends.

These, my memoirs, will be the picture of what the national character then was; and will prove, that with the officers who lived like brothers, and held their word so sacred, the great Frederick well might vanquish his enemies. Arbitrary power has introduced the whip of slavery, and the mechanic subordination has eradicated those noble and rational incitements to concord and honor; instead of these, mistrust and slavish fear have arisen, the enthusiastic spirit of the Brandenburg warrior declines, and into this error have most of the other European states fallen.

Scarcely had I borne my friend three hundred paces before I sat down and looked around me, but darkness came on so fast that I could see neither town nor citadel, consequently, we ourselves could not be seen.

My presence of mind did not forsake me; death or freedom was my determination. Where are we, Schell? said I to my friend. Where does Bohemia lie? On which side is the river Neiss? The worthy man could make no answer; his mind was

all confusion, and he despaired of our making our escape; he still, however, entreated I would not let him be taken alive, and affirmed my labor was in vain.

After having promised, by all that was sacred, I would save him from an infamous death, if no other means were left, and thus raised his spirits, he looked round and knew by some trees we were not far from the city gates. I asked him, where is the Neiss? He pointed sideways. "All Glatz has seen us fly toward the Bohemian mountains; it is impossible we should avoid the hussars, being all guarded, and we beset with enemies." So saying, I took him on my shoulders, and carried him to the Neiss; here we distinctly heard the alarm sounded in the villages, and the peasants, who likewise were to form the line of desertion, were every where in motion, and spreading the alarm. As it may not be known to all my readers in what manner they proceed on these occasions in Prussia, I will here give a short account of it.

Officers are daily named on the parade, whose duty it is to follow fugitives, as soon as the alarm guns are fired.

The peasants in the village likewise are daily appointed to run to the guard of certain posts. The officers immediately fly to these posts to see that the peasants do their duty, and prevent the prisoners' escape. Thus does it seldom happen that a soldier can make his escape, unless he be, at the very least, an hour on his road before the alarm gun is fired.

I now return to my story. I came to the Neiss, which was a little frozen, entered with my friend, and carried him as long as I could wade, and when I could not feel the bottom, which was not more than eighteen feet, he clung round me, and thus we got safely to the other shore. My father taught all his sons to swim, for which I have often to thank him, since by means of this art, which is easily learned in childhood, I had on various occasions preserved my life, and was more bold in danger. Princes, who wish to make their subjects soldiers, should have them educated so as to fear neither fire nor water. How great would be the advantage of being able to cross, with whole battalions, when it is necessary to attack or retreat before the enemy, and

time will not permit to prepare bridges! The reader will easily suppose swimming in the midst of December, and remaining afterwards eighteen hours in the open air, was a severe hardship.

About seven o'clock the hoar fog was succeeded by frost and moonlight. The carrying of my friend kept me warm it is true, but I began to be tired, whilst he suffered every thing that frost, the pain of a dislocated foot, which I in vain endeavored to reset, and the danger of death from a thousand hands, could inflict. We were somewhat more tranquil, however, having reached the opposite shore of the Neiss, since nobody would pursue us on the road to Silesia. I followed the course of the river for half an hour, and having once passed the first villages that formed the line of desertion, with which Schell was perfectly acquainted, we in a lucky moment found a fisherman's boat moored to the shore; into this we leaped, crossed the river again, and soon gained the mountains. Here being come, we sat ourselves down awhile on the snow, hope revived in our hearts, and we held a counsel concerning how it was best to act. I cut a stick to assist Schell in hopping forward, as well as he could, when I was tired of carrying him; and thus we continued our route, the difficulties of which were increased on the mountain spows.

Thus passed the night, during which, up to the middle in snow, we made but little way. There were no paths to be traced in the mountains, and they were in many places impassable. Day at length appeared; we thought ourselves near the frontiers, which are twenty English miles from Glatz, when we suddenly, to our great terror, heard the clock strike. Overwhelmed as we were, by hunger, cold, fatigue, and pain, it was impossible we could hold out through the day. After some consideration, and another half hour's labor, we came to a village at the foot of the mountain, on the side of which, about three hundred paces from us, we perceived two separate houses, which inspired us with a stratagem that was successful. We lost our hats in leaping the ramparts; but Schell had preserved his scarf and gorget, which would give him authority among the peasants.

I then cut my finger, rubbed the blood over my face, my shirt, and my coat, and bound up my head, to give me the appearance of a man dangerously wounded. In this condition I carried Schell to the end of the wood not far from these houses, here he tied my hands behind my back, but so that I could easily disengage them in case of need, and bobbled after me by the aid of his staff, calling for help.

Two old peasants appeared; Schell commanded them to run to the village and tell a magistrate to come immediately with a cart. "I have seized this knave," added he, "who has killed my horse, and in the struggle put out my ankle. However, I have wounded and bound him; fly quickly, bring a cart, lest he should die before he is hanged."

As for me, I suffered myself to be led, as if half dead, into the house. A peasant was dispatched into the village. An old woman and a pretty girl seemed to take great pity on me, and gave me some bread and milk; but how great was our astonishment when the aged peasant called Schell by his name, and told him we were deserters, having the night before been at a neighboring ale-house, where the officer in pursuit of us came, named and described us, and related the whole history of our flight. The peasant knew Schell, because his son served in his company, and had often spoken of him when he was quartered at Habelschwert.

Presence of mind and resolution was all that were now left. I instantly ran to the stable, while Schell detained the peasant in the chamber. He, however, was a worthy man, and directed him the road towards Bohemia. We were still but about seven miles from Glatz, having lost ourselves among the mountains, where we had wandered many miles. The daughter followed me—I found three horses in the stable, but no bridles; I conjured her in the most passionate manner to assist me; she was affected, seemed half willing to follow me, and gave me the two bridles. I led the horses to the door, called Schell, and helped him, with his lame leg, on horseback. The old peasant then began to weep, and beg I would not take his horses; but he luckily wanted courage, and perhaps the will to impede us; for with a single

dung-fork, in our present feeble condition, he might have stopped us long enough to have called in assistance from the village.

And now behold us on horseback, without hats or saddles; Schell with his uniform, scarf and gorget, and I in my red body guard coat. Still were we in danger of seeing all our hopes vanish, for my horse would not stir from the stable; however, at last, good horseman like, I made him move: Schell led the way, and we had scarcely gone an hundred paces before we perceived the peasants coming in crowds from the village.

As kind fortune would have it, the people were all at church, it being a festival; the peasants Schell had sent were obliged to call aid out of the church. It was but nine in the morning, and had the peasants been at home, we had been lost without hope.

We were obliged to take the road to Wunshelburg, and pass through the town where Schell had been quartered a month before, and every body knew him. Our dress, without hats or saddles, sufficiently proclaimed we were deserters; our horses, however, continued to go tolerably well, and we had the good fortune to get through the town, although there was a garrison of one hundred and eighty infantry, and twelve horse, purposely to arrest deserters. Schell knew the road to Braunau, where we arrived at eleven o'clock, after having met, as I before mentioned, Captain Zerbat.

He alone, who has been in the same situation, can imagine, though not describe, all the joy we felt. An innocent man, languishing in a dungeon, who by his own endeavors, has broken his chains and regained his liberty, in despite of all the arbitrary power of princes, who vainly would oppose him, conceives, in moments like these, such abhorrence of all despotisms, that I could not well comprehend how I ever could resolve to live under governments, where wealth, content, honor, liberty, and life, all depend upon a monarch's will; and who, were his intentions the most pure, could not be able singly to do justice to a whole nation. Never did I, during my life, feel pleasure more exquisite than at this moment. My friend, for me, had risked a shameful death, and now, after having carried him at least

twelve hours on my shoulders, I had saved both him and myself. We certainly would not have suffered any man to carry us alive again to Glatz. Yet this was but the first act of the tragedy, of which I was doomed the hero, and the mournful incidents of which all arose out of, and depended on each other. And now, for the first time, did I quit my country, and fly, like Joseph from the pit into which his false brethren had cast him; and in this, the present moment of joy for my escape, the loss of even friends and country appeared to me the excess of good fortune.

The estates which had been purchased by the blood of my forefathers were confiscated; and thus was a youth of one of the noblest families in the land, whose heart was all zeal for the service of his king and country, and who was among those most capable to render them services, banished by this unjust and misled king, and treated like the worst of miscreants, malefactors and traitors.

I wrote to the king and sent him indubitable proofs of my innocence, and supplicated justice, but received no answer. In this the monarch may be justified, at least in my apprehension. A wicked man had maliciously and falsely accused me.

The monarch once really loved me; he meant my punishment should only be temporary, and as a trial of my fidelity. That I had only been condemned to a year's imprisonment, had never been told me, and was a fact I did not learn till long after.

And now was I in Bohemia, a fugitive stranger, without money, protector or friend, and only twenty years of age. I had but a single louis-d'or in my purse, and Schell forty kreutzers, or some three shillings; with this small sum, in a strange country, we had to cure his sprain and provide for all our wants.

I was determined not to go to my cousin Trenck, at Vienna, fearful this should seem a justification of all my imputed treasons. I rather wished to embark for the East Indies than to have recourse to this expedient. The greater my delicacy was, the greater became my distress. I wrote to my mistress at Berlin, but received no answer, possibly because I could not indicate any certain mode of conveyance. My mother believed me guilty, and abandoned me; my brothers were still minors, and my

04/29/18
friend at Schweidnitz could not aid me, being gone to Konigsberg.

After three weeks abode at Braunau, my friend recovered his lameness. We had been obliged to sell my watch, with his scarf and gorget, and had only four florins remaining.

From the public papers I learnt my cousin, the Austrian Trenck, was at this time closely confined, and under criminal prosecution. It will be easily imagined what effect this news had upon me.

Never till now, had I felt any inconvenience from poverty; my wants had all been amply supplied, and I had ever lived among, and been highly loved and esteemed by the first people of the land. I was now destitute, without aid, and undetermined how to seek employment or obtain fame.

At length I determined to travel on foot to Prussia, to my mother, and obtain money from her, and afterward to enter into the Russian service. Schell, whose destiny was linked to mine, would not forsake me. We assumed false names—I called myself Knerr, and Schell, Lesch—then obtaining passports, like common deserters, we left Braunau on the 21st of January, in the evening, unseen by any person, and proceeded towards Bilitz in Poland. A friend I had at Neurode, gave me a pair of pocket pistols, a musket, and three ducats; the money was spent at Braunau. Here let me take occasion to remark, I had lent this friend in urgent necessity, a hundred ducats, which he yet owed me; and when I sent to request payment, he returned me three, as if I had asked charity.

Though a circumstantial description of our travels would alone fill a volume, I shall only relate the most singular accidents which happened to us.

This may be called the first scene in which I appeared as an adventurer, and perhaps my good fortune may even have overbalanced the bad, since I have escaped death full thirty times, when the chances were at least a hundred to one against me; certain it is, I undertook many things, in which I seemed to have owed my preservation to the very rashness of the action, and in which others, equally brave, would have found death.

After encountering and overcoming a number of difficulties and hair breadth escapes, we arrived at Vienna in the month of April, 1747. But desirous of going to India, I left Vienna in August 1748, desirous of owing no obligation to that city or its inhabitants, and went for Holland. And here an adventure happened to me which I shall ever remember as a warning to myself, and insert as a memento to others.

The army physician on this day kept a faro bank, for the entertainment of the guests. My stock of money consisted of two and twenty ducats. Thirst of gain, or perhaps example, induced me to venture two of these, which I immediately lost; and very soon, by venturing again, to regain them, the whole two and twenty. Chagrined at my folly, I returned home, and recovering my spirits, asked my servant what money he had, and received from him three ducats. With these I repaired like a desperate gamester, once more to the faro table at the general's, again began to play, and so extraordinary was my run of luck, I won at every venture. Having recovered my principal, I played on the winnings, till at last I had absolutely broke the doctor's bank; a new bank was set up, and I won the greatest part of this likewise, so that I brought home 600 ducats. Rejoiced at my good fortune, but recollecting my danger, I had the prudence to make a solemn resolution never more to play at any game of chance, to which I ever adhered.

General Leuwin, my kind patron, sent me from Cracow to conduct 146 men down the Vistula to Dantzic, where there were Russian vessels to receive and transport them to Riga.

And now behold me at sea on my voyage to Riga. I had eaten heartily before I went on board: a storm came on, I worked half the night to aid the crew, but at length became sea-sick and went to lie down. Scarcely had I closed my eyes, before the master came with the joyful tidings, as he thought, that we were running for the port of Pillau. Far from pleasing, this was to me dreadful intelligence. I ran on deck, saw the harbor right before me, and a pilot coming off. The sea must now either be kept in a storm, or I fall into the hands of the Prussians, for I was known to the whole garrison of Pillau.

I desired the captain to tack about and keep the sea, but he would not listen to me. Perceiving this, I flew to my cabin, snatched my pistols, returned, seized the helm, and threatened the captain with instant death if he did not obey. My Russians began to murmur; they were averse to encountering the dangers of the storm, but luckily they were more averse to meet my anger, overawed as they were by my pistols and my two servants who stood by me faithfully.

Half an hour after, the storm began to subside, and we fortunately arrived the next day in the harbor of Riga. The captain, however, could not be appeased, but accused me before the old and honorable Marshal Lacy, then governor of Riga. I was obliged to appear, and replied to the charge by relating the truth. The governor answered, my obstinacy might have occasioned the death of 160 persons. I, smiling, retorted, "I have brought them all safe to port, please your excellency; and for my part, my fate would be much more merciful by falling into the hands of my God, than into the hands of my enemies. My danger was so great, that I forgot the dangers of others, besides, sir, I knew my comrades were soldiers, and feared death as little as I." My answer pleased the fine grey-headed general, and he gave me a recommendation to the chancellor, Bestuchef, at Moscow.

From Riga, I departed in company with M. Oettinger, lieutenant colonel of engineers, and Lieutenant Weiseman for Moscow. This is the same Weiseman who rendered so many important services to Russia during the last war with the Turks. On my arrival, after delivering in my letters of recommendation, I was particularly well received by Count Bestuchef. Oettinger, whose friendship I had gained, was exceedingly intimate with the chancellor, and my interest was thereby promoted. I was now introduced into all the companies, not as a foreigner who came to entreat employment, but as the heir of the house of Trenck and its rich Hungarian possessions, and as the former favorite of the Prussian monarch. My adventures with women would amply furnish a romance; but enough of this; I should not relate the present, were it not necessary for my story.

Dining one public day with Lord Hynford, I was seated beside a charming young lady of one of the best families in Russia, who had been promised in marriage, though only seventeen, to an old invalid minister. Her eyes soon told me she thought me preferable to her intended bridegroom. I understood them, lamented her hard fate, and was surprised to hear her exclaim, "Oh Heavens! that it were possible you could deliver me from my misfortunes; I would engage to do whatever you would direct." The impression such an appeal must make on a man of four and twenty, of a temperament like mine, may easily be supposed. The lady was ravishingly beautiful; her soul was candor itself, and her rank that of a princess; but the court's commands had already been given in favor of the marriage, and flight, with all its inseparable dangers, was the only expedient. A public table was no place for long explanations. Our hearts were already one. I requested an interview, and the next day was appointed, the place the Trotzer garden, where I passed these rapturous hours in her company—thanks to her woman, who was a Georgian.

To escape, however, from Moscow, was impossible. The distance thence to any foreign country was too great. The court was not to remove to Petersburg till the next spring, and her marriage was fixed for the first of August. The misfortune was not to be remedied, and nothing was left us but patience perforce. We could only resolve to fly from Petersburg, when there, as soon as possible, and to take refuge in some corner of the earth, where we might remain unknown to all. The marriage, therefore, was celebrated with pomp, though I, in despite of forms, was the true husband of the princess. Such was the state of the husband imposed upon her, that to describe it, and not give disgust, were impossible.

The princess gave me her jewels, and several thousand rubles, which she had received as a nuptial present, that I might purchase every thing necessary for flight; my evil destiny had otherwise determined. I was playing at ombre with her one night, at the house of the countess of Bestuchef, when she complained of a violent head ache, appointed me to meet her on the

morning, in the Trotzer gardens, clasped my hand with inexpressible emotion, and departed. Alas! I never beheld her more, till stretched upon her bier. She grew delirious that very night, and so continued till her death, which happened on the sixth day, when the small pox began to appear. Amidst her distraction she had discovered our love, and incessantly called on me to deliver her from her tyrant. Thus, in the flower of her age, perished one of the most lovely women I ever knew, and with her fled all I held most dear.

No man, in my youth, would have believed I should have lived to my sixtieth year, untitled and obscure. In Berlin, Petersburg, London and Paris have I been esteemed by the greatest statesmen, and now I am reduced to the invalid list. How strange are the caprices of fortune! I ought never to have left Russia; this was my great error, which I still live to repent.

I have never been accustomed to sleep more than four or five hours, so that though through life I have allowed time for paying visits and receiving company, I have still had sufficient for study and improvement. Hyndford was my instructor in politics; Boerhave, then physician to the court, and my bosom friend, my tutor in physic and literary subjects. Women formed me for court intrigues, though these, as a philosopher, I despised.

My cousin, Baron Trenck, died in the Spielberg, October 4, 1749, and left me his heir on condition I should only serve the house of Austria. In March, 1750, Count Bernes received the citation sent me to enter on this inheritance. Hyndford assured me of his eternal protection, and described London as a certain asylum, should I not find happiness at Vienna. He spoke of slavery as a Briton ought to speak, reminded me of the fate of Munich and Osterman, painted the court such as I knew it to be, and asked what were my expectations, even were I fortunate enough to become general, or minister in such a country. These reasonings at length determined me; but, having plenty of money, I thought proper to take Stockholm, Copenhagen, and Holland in my way; and Bernes was, in the mean time, to prepare me a favorable reception at Vienna. He desired also I would give him authority to get possession of the estates to which I was

beir. My effects, in money and jewels, amounted to about thirty-six thousand florins. After remaining a few days at Petersburg, I journeyed by land to Stockholm, taking with me letters of recommendation from all the foreign envoys.

At Stockholm I wanted no recommendation; the queen, sister to the great Frederick, had known me at Berlin, when I had the honor, as an officer of the body guard, of accompanying her to Stettin. I related my whole history to her without reserve. She, from political motives, advised me not to make any stay in Stockholm, and to me continued, till death, an ever gracious lady. I proceeded to Copenhagen, where I had business to transact for M. Chaise, the Danish envoy at Moscow; from whom also I had letters of recommendation. Here I had the pleasure of meeting my old friend Bach, who had aided me in my escape from my imprisonment at Glatz. He was poor, and in debt, and I procured him protection, by relating the noble manner in which he had behaved. I presented him with 500 ducats, by the aid of which he pushed his fortune. He wrote to me in the year 1776, a letter of sincerest thanks, and died a colonel of hussars in the Danish service in 1779.

I remained in Copenhagen but a fortnight, and then sailed in a Dutch ship from Elsinour for Amsterdam. Scarcely had we put to sea, before a storm arose, by which we lost a mast and our bowsprit, had our sails shattered, and were obliged to cast anchor among the rocks of Gottenburgh, where our deliverance was singularly fortunate. An honest Calmuc whom I had brought from Russia, and another of my servants, perished. I saw the first sink after I reached the shore. The kind Swedes brought me on board, and also righted and returned with the shallop. We weighed anchor, and sailed for the Texel, the mouth of which we saw, and the pilots coming off, when another storm arose, and drove us to the port of Bahus, in Norway, into which we ran without further damage. In some few days we again set sail, with a fair wind, and at length reached Amsterdam.

Here I made no long stay, for the day after my arrival an extraordinary adventure happened, in which I was engaged;

chiefly by my own rashness. I was a spectator while the harpooners of the whale fishery were exercising themselves in darting their harpoons, most of whom were drunk. One of them, Herman Rogaar, by name, a hero among these people for his dexterity with his snickasnee, came up, and passed some of his coarse jokes upon my Turkish sabre, and offered to fillip me upon the nose. I pushed him from me, and the fellow threw down his cap, drew his snickasnee, and challenged me, called me monkey tail, and asked whether I chose a straight, circular, or a cross cut? Thus, here was I, in this excellent company, with no choice, but that of either fighting or running away. The robust Herculean fellow grew more insolent, and I, turning round to the bystanders, asked them to lend me a snickasnee. "No, no," said the challenger, "draw your great knife from your side, and, long as it is, I will lay you a dozen ducats you get a gash in the cheek." I drew; he confidently advanced with his snickasnee, and, at the first stroke of my sabre, that, and the hand that held it, dropped to the ground, and the blood spouted in my face.

I now expected the people would, indubitably, tear me to pieces; but my fear was changed into astonishment at hearing a universal shout, applauding the vanquisher of the redoubted Herman Rogaar, who, so lately feared for his strength and dexterity, became the object of their ridicule.

I left Amsterdam for the Hague, where I had been recommended to lord Holderness, the English ambassador, by lord Hynford.

One Mr. Schneck sought my acquaintance at the Hague. I met with him at my hotel, where he entreated I would take him to Nuremberg, whence he was to proceed to Saxony. I complied, and bore his expenses; but at Hanau, waking in the morning, I found my watch, set with diamonds, a ring worth two thousand rubles, a diamond snuff-box, with my mistress's picture, and my purse containing about 18 ducats, stolen from my bed side, and Schneck become invisible. Little affected by the loss of my money at any time, I yet was grieved for my snuff-box. The rascal, however, escaped, and it was fortunate the remain-

der of my ready money, with my bills of exchange, were safely locked up.

I now pursued my journey without company, and arrived at Vienna; I can not exactly recollect in what month, but I had been absent two years, and the reader will allow, that it was barely possible for any man, in so short a time, to have experienced more various changes of fate, though smaller incidents have been suppressed.

Francis, Baron Trenck, died in the Spielberg, Oct. 4, 1749. It has been erroneously believed in Vienna, that his estates were confiscated by the sentence which condemned him to the Spielberg. He had committed no offence against the state, was accused of none, much less convicted. The court sentence was, that the administration of his estate should be committed to counsellor Kempt and Baron Peyaozewitz, who were selected by himself, and the accounts of his stewards and farmers were to be sent to him yearly. He continued, till his death, to have the free and entire disposal of his property.

The father of Baron Trenck, who died in the year 1743, governor of Leitschau, in Hungary, named me in his will the successor of his son, should he die without male heirs. He knew I was the legal claimant to his father's estates. His father had bought, with the family money remitted from Prussia, the lordships of Prestowacz and Pleternitz in Sclavonia, and he himself, during his father's life, and with his father's money, had purchased the lordship of Pakratz, for forty thousand florins. This must, therefore, also descend to me, he having no more power to will this from me, than he had the remainder of his paternal inheritance.

Such was the state of affairs, as willed by Trenck, when I came to Vienna in 1750, where I arrived with money and jewels to the amount of 20,000 florins. Instead of profiting by the wealth Trenck had acquired, I expended 120,000 florins of my own money, including what devolved to me by my uncle, his father, in the prosecution of his suits.

How often have I repented I did not return to Berlin! I should have escaped ten years' imprisonment; should have received the

estates of Trenck, should not have wasted my prime of life in the litigation of suits, and the writing of memorials, and should have certainly been ranked among the first men in my native country. Vienna was no place for a man who could not fawn and flatter; yet here was I destined to remain six and thirty years, unrewarded, unemployed, and through youth and age to continue on the list of invalid majors.

Once more to my story; I was obliged to take upon myself the management of sixty-three suits, and the expenses attending any one of these are well known to those acquainted with Vienna. My situation may be imagined, when I inform the reader that I only received 300 florins from the estates of Trenck, in three years, which were scarcely sufficient to defray the expenses of new years' gifts to the solicitors and masters in chancery.

In three years, however, I brought my sixty-three suits to a kind of conclusion; the probabilities were, this could not have been effected in fifty.

In the year 1754, and the month of March, my mother died in Prussia, and I requested permission of the court that held the inheritance of Trenck, as a *fidei commissum*, to make a journey to Dantzic to settle with my brothers and sister, my estates being confiscated. This permission was granted, and thither I went in May, where I once more fell into the hands of the Prussians, which was the second great and still more important epocha in my life. All who read what follows will shudder, will commiserate him, who, feeling himself innocent, relates afflictions he has miserably encountered, and gloriously overcome.

I left Hungary, where I was in garrison, for Dantzic, where I had desired my brothers and sister to meet me, that we might settle our affairs. My principal intent, however, was a journey to Petersburg, there to seek the advice and aid of my friends, for law and persecution were not ended at Vienna; and my captain's pay and small income were scarcely sufficient to defray the charges of attorneys and counsellors.

I was immediately visited by my brothers and sister, on my arrival at Dantzic, where we lived happy in each other's company, during a fortnight, and an amicable partition was made

of my mother's effects; my sister perfectly justified herself concerning the manner in which I was obliged to fly in the year 1746; our parting was kind, and as brother and sister ought to part.

The day of supposed departure, on board a Swedish ship for Riga, approached, and the deceitful resident, Abramson, promised to send one of his servants to the port to know the hour. About four in the afternoon, he told me he had himself spoken to the captain, who said he should not sail till the next day; adding that he, Abramson, would expect me to breakfast, and would then accompany me to the vessel. I felt a secret inquietude, which made me desirous of leaving Dantzic, and immediately to send all my baggage, and sleep on board. Abramson prevented me, dragged me almost forcibly along with him, telling me he had much company, and that I must absolutely dine and sup at his house; accordingly I did not return to my inn till eleven at night. I was but just in bed when I heard a knocking at my door, which was not shut, and two of the city magistrates, with twenty grenadiers, entered my chamber, and surrounded my bed so suddenly that I had not time to take my arms and defend myself. My three servants had been secured, and I was told that the most worthy magistracy of Dantzic was obliged to deliver me up, as a delinquent, to his majesty the king of Prussia.

The next night, two magistrates, with their posse, came to my prison attended by resident Reimer, a Prussian officer, and other officers, and into their hands I was delivered. The pillage instantly began; Reimer tore off my ring, seized my watch, snuff box, and all I had; not so much as sending me a coat or shirt, from my effects; after which they put me into a close coach, with three Prussians. The Dantzic guard accompanied the carriage to the city gate, that was opened to let me pass, after which the Dantzic dragoons escorted me as far as Lunenburg, in Pomerania.

I have forgotten the date of this miserable day, but to the best of my memory, it must have been in the beginning of June. Thirty Prussian hussars, commanded by a lieutenant, relieved the dragoons at Lunenburg, and thus was I guarded till I arrived at Berlin.

I was escorted from garrison to garrison, which were distant from each other two, three, or at most five miles; wherever I came, I found compassion and respect. The detachment of hussars only attended me two days: it consisted of twelve men, and an officer, who rode with me in the carriage.

The fourth day I arrived at——; where the Duke of Wirtemberg, father of the present Grand Duchess of Russia, was commander, and where his regiment was in quarters. The Duke conversed with me, was much moved, invited me to dine, and detained me all day, where I was not treated as a prisoner. I so far gained his esteem, that I was allowed to remain there the next day; the chief persons of the place were assembled, and the Duchess, whom he had lately married, testified every mark of pity and esteem. I stayed to dine with him also on the third day, after which I departed in an open carriage, without escort, attended only by a lieutenant of his regiment.

In a small garrison town, I lodged in the house of a captain of cavalry, and continually was treated with every mark of friendship. After dinner, he rode at the head of his squadron to water the horse unsaddled. I remained alone in the house, entered the stable, saw three remaining horses, with saddles and bridles; in my chamber was a sword, and a pair of pistols. I had but to mount one of the horses and fly to the opposite gate. I meditated on the project, and almost resolved to put it into execution, but presently became undetermined by some secret impulse. The next day he accompanied me alone in his carriage: we came to a forest; he saw some champignons, stopped, asked me to alight, and help to gather them; he strayed more than a hundred paces from me, and gave me entire liberty to fly: yet notwithstanding all this, I voluntarily returned, suffering myself to be led, like a sheep to the slaughter.

I was treated so well, and escorted with so much negligence, that I fell into a gross error. Perceiving they conveyed me straight to Berlin, I imagined the king wished to question me concerning the plan formed for the war, which was then on the point of breaking out. This plan I perfectly knew, the secret correspondence of Bestuchef having all passed through my

hands, which circumstance was better known at Berlin than at Vienna. Confirmed in this opinion, and far from imagining the fate that awaited me, I remained irresolute, inexpressible, and blind to danger. Alas, how short was this hope! How quickly was it succeeded by despair, when, after four days' march, I quitted the district under the command of the duke of Wirtemberg, and was delivered up to the garrison of infantry at Colfin. The last of the Wirtemberg officers, when taking leave of me, appeared to be greatly affected; and from this moment, till I came to Berlin, I was put under a strong escort, and the given orders were rigorously observed.

Arrived here, I was lodged over the grand guard house, with two sentinels in my chamber, and one at my door. The king was at Potsdam, and here I remained three days: on the third, some staff officers made their appearance, seated themselves at a table, and put the following questions to me:

First. What was my business at Dantzic?

Secondly. Whether I was acquainted with M. Goltz, Prussian ambassador, in Russia?

Thirdly. Who was concerned with me in the conspiracy at Dantzic?

When I perceived their intention, by these interrogations, I absolutely refused to reply, only saying, I had been imprisoned in the fortress of Glatz, without hearing, or trial by court-martial; that availing myself of the laws of nature, I had by my own exertions procured my liberty, and that I was now captain of cavalry in the imperial service; that I demanded a legal trial for my first unknown offence, after which I engaged to answer all interrogatories, and prove my innocence; but that at present, being accused of new crimes, without a hearing concerning my former punishment, the procedure was illegal. I was told they had no orders concerning this, and I remained dumb to all further questions.

They wrote, some two hours, God knows what; a carriage came up; I was strictly searched, to find whether I had any weapons; thirteen or fourteen ducats, which I had concealed, were taken from me, and I was conducted under a strong escort,

through Spandau to Magdebourg. The officer here delivered me up to the captain of the guard of the citadel, the town major came and brought me to the dungeon, expressly prepared for me; a small picture of the countess of Bestuchef, set with diamonds, which I had kept concealed in my bosom, was now taken from me; the door was shut, and here was I left.

My dungeon was in a casement, the fore part of which, six feet wide, and ten feet long, was divided by a party wall. In the inner wall were three doors, and a third at the entrance of the casement itself. The window in the seven feet thick wall was so situated, that though I had light I could see neither heaven nor earth; I could only see the roof of the magazine. Within and without this window were iron bars, and in the space between an iron grating, so close, and so situated by the rising of the walls, that it was impossible I should see any person without the prison, or that any person should see me. On the outside was a wooden palisado, six feet from the wall, by which the sentinels were prevented from conveying anything to me. I had a mattress and a bedstead, but which was immovable, ironed to the floor, so that it was impossible I should drag it and stand to the window; beside the door was a small iron stove, and a night table, in like manner fixed to the floor. I was not yet put in irons, and my allowance was a pound and an half per day of ammunition bread, and a jug of water. From my youth I had always had a good appetite, and my bread was so mouldy I could scarcely at first eat the half of it. This was the consequence of Major Reiding's avarice, who endeavored to profit even by this, so great was the number of unfortunate prisoners, therefore it is impossible to describe the excess of tortures that, during eleven months, I felt from ravenous hunger.

My three doors were kept ever shut, and I was left to such meditations as such feelings and such hopes might inspire. Daily about noon, once in twenty-four hours my pittance of bread and water was brought, the keys of all the doors were kept by the governor; the inner door was not opened, but my bread and water were delivered through an aperture. The prison doors were opened only once a week, on a Wednesday,

when the governor and town major, my hole having been first cleaned, paid their visit.

Having remained thus two months, and observed this method was invariable, I began to execute a project I had formed, of the possibility of which I was convinced. Where the night table and stove stood, the floor was bricked, and this paving extended to the wall that separated my casement from the adjoining one, in which was no prisoner. My window was only guarded by a single sentinel; I therefore soon found among those who successively relieved guard, two kind hearted fellows, who described to me the situation of my prison; hence I perceived I might effect my escape, could I but penetrate into the adjoining casement, the door of which was not shut, provided I had a friend, and a boat waiting for me at the Elbe, or could I swim across that river; the confines of Saxony were but a mile distant.

To describe my plan at length, would lead to prolixity, yet I must enumerate some of its circumstances, as it was remarkably intricate, and of gigantic labor.

I worked through the iron, eighteen inches long, by which the night table was fastened, and broke off the clinchings of the nails, but preserved their heads, that I might put them in their places, and all might appear secure to my visitors. This procured me tools to raise up the brick floor under which I found earth. My first attempt was to work a hole through the wall, seven feet thick behind, and concealed by the night table. The first layer was of brick. I afterwards came to large hewn stones. I endeavored accurately to number and remember the bricks, both of the flooring and the wall, so that I might replace them, and all appear safe; this having been accomplished, I proceeded.

The day preceding visitation, all was carefully replaced, and the intervening mortar as carefully preserved; the whole had probably been whitewashed an hundred times, and that I might fill up all remaining interstices, I pounded the white stuff this afforded, wet it, made a brush of my hair, then applied this plaster, washed it over that the color might be uniform, and afterwards stripped myself and sat with the heat of my naked body against the place, by the heat of which it was dried. While

laboring, I placed the stones and bricks upon my bedstead; and had they taken the precaution to come at any other time in the week, the stated Wednesday excepted, I had inevitably been discovered; but as no such ill accident befell me, in six months my Herculean labors gave me a prospect of success.

Means were to be found to remove the rubbish from my prison; all of which, in a wall so thick, it was impossible to replace; mortar and stone could not be removed. I therefore took the earth, scattered it about my chamber, and ground it under my feet the whole day, till I had reduced it to dust; this dust I strewed in the aperture of my window, making use of the loosened night table to stand upon. I tied splinters from my bedstead together with the ravelled yarn of an old stocking, and to this affixed a tuft of my hair. I worked a large hole under the middle grating, which could not be seen when standing on the ground; and through this I pushed the dust, with the tool I had prepared, to the outer window, then, waiting till the wind should happen to rise, during the night, I brushed it away; it was blown off, and no appearance remained on the outside. By this single expedient, I rid myself of at least three hundred pounds weight of earth, and thus made room to continue my labor—yet, this being still insufficient, I had recourse to another artifice, which was, to knead up the earth in the form of sausages, to resemble the human feces; these I dried, and when the prisoner came to clean my dungeon, hastily tossed them into the night table, and thus disencumbered myself of a pound or two more of earth, each week. I further made little balls, and when the sentinel was walking, blew them through a paper tube, out of the window. Into the empty space I put my mortar and stones, and worked on successfully. I can not, however, describe my difficulties after having penetrated about two feet into the hewn stone. My tools were the irons I had dug out, which fastened my bedstead and night table. A compassionate soldier, also gave me an old ramrod, and a soldier's sheath knife, which did me excellent service, more especially the latter, as I shall presently more fully show. With these I cut splinters from my bedstead, which aided me to pick the mortar from the interstices of the

stone; yet the labor of penetrating through this seven feet wall was incredible; the building was ancient, and the mortar, occasionally, quite petrified, so that the whole stone was obliged to be reduced to dust. After continuing my work unremittingly for six months, I at length approached the accomplishment of my hopes, as I knew, by coming to the facing of brick, which was now only between me and the adjoining casement.

Mean time I found opportunity to speak to some of the sentinels, among whom was an old grenadier called Gefhardt, whom I here name, because he displayed qualities of the greatest and most noble kind. From him I learned the precise situation of my prison, and every circumstance that might best conduce to my escape.

Nothing was wanting but money to buy a boat, and crossing the Elbe with Gefhardt, to take refuge in Saxony. By Gefhardt's means, I became acquainted with a kind-hearted girl, a Jewess, and a native of Dessau, Esther Heymannin by name, and whose father had been ten years in prison. This good, compassionate maiden, whom I had never seen, won over two other grenadiers, who gave her an opportunity of speaking to me every time they stood sentinel. By tying my splinters together I made a stick long enough to reach beyond the palisades before my window, and thus obtained paper, another knife, and a file.

I now wrote to my sister, the wife of the before mentioned only son of General Waldow, described my situation, and entreated her to remit three hundred rix dollars to the Jewess, hoping by this means I might escape from my prison. Esther cheerfully departed for Hammer, where my sister, then a widow, and no longer, as in 1746, in dread of her husband, joyful to hear I was still living, immediately gave her the three hundred rix dollars, exhorting her to exert every possible means to obtain my deliverance. Esther hastened back, with the letter from my sister to me, to Berlin, and told me all that had passed.

The king came to a review at Magdebourg, when he visited the Star Fort, and commanded a new cell to be immediately made, prescribing, himself, the kind of irons by which I was to be secured. The honest Gefhardt heard the officer say this cell

was meant for me; gave me notice of it, but assured me it could not be ready in less than a month. I therefore determined, as soon as possible, to complete my breach in the wall, and escape without the aid of any one. The thing was possible, for I twisted the hair of my mattress into a rope, which I meant to tie to a cannon, and descend the rampart, after which I might swim across the Elbe, gain the Saxon frontiers, and thus safely escape.

On the 28th of May I had determined to break into the next casement, but when I came to work at the bricks, I found them so hard and strongly cemented, that I was obliged to defer the labor to the following day. I left off, weary and spent, at daybreak, and should any one enter my dungeon, they must infallibly discover the breach. How dreadful is the destiny by which, through life, I have been persecuted, and which has continually plunged me headlong into calamity, when I imagined happiness was at hand!

The 27th of May was a cruel day in the history of my life. My cell in the Star Fort had been finished sooner than Gefhardt had supposed; and at night, when I was preparing to fly, I heard a carriage stop before my prison. Oh God! what was my terror, what were the horrors of this moment of despair! The locks and bolts resounded, the doors flew open, and the last of my poor remaining resources was to conceal my knife. The town-major, the major of the day, and a captain entered: I saw them by the light of their two lanterns. The only words they spoke, were, "dress yourself," which was immediately done. I still wore the uniform of the regiment of Cordova. Irons were given me, which I was obliged myself to fasten on my wrists and ancles; the town major tied a bandage over my eyes, and taking me under the arm, they thus conducted me to the carriage. It was necessary to pass through the city to arrive at the Star Fort. All was silent, except the noise of the escort; but when we entered Magdebourg, I heard the people running, who were crowding together, to obtain a sight of me. Their curiosity was raised by the report that I was going to be beheaded. That I was executed on this occasion, in the Star Fort, after having been conducted blind-folded through the city, has since been

both affirmed and written, and the officers had then orders to propagate this error, that the world might remain in utter ignorance concerning me. I, indeed, knew otherwise, though I affected not to have this knowledge; and as I was not gagged, I behaved as if I expected death—reproached my conductors in language that even made them shudder, and painted their king in his true colours, as one who, unheard, had condemned an innocent subject by a despotic exertion of power. My fortitude was admired, at the moment when it was supposed I thought myself leading to execution. No one replied, but their sighs intimated their compassion; certain it is, few Prussians willingly execute such commands. The carriage at length stopped, and I was brought into my new cell.

The bandage was taken from my eyes. The dungeon was lighted by a few torches. God of heaven! what were my feelings when I beheld the whole floor covered with chains, a fire pan, and two grim men standing with their smith hammers!

To work went these engines of despotism; enormous chains were fixed to my ankle at one end, and at the other to a ring which was incorporated in the wall. This ring was three feet from the ground, and only allowed me to move about two or three feet to the right and left. They next riveted another huge iron ring, of a hand's breadth, round my naked body, to which hung a chain fixed into an iron bar as thick as a man's arm. This bar was two feet in length, and at each end of it was a handcuff. The iron collar round my neck was not added till the year 1756.

No soul bade me good night. All retired in dreadful silence, and I heard the horrible grating of four doors that were successively locked and bolted upon me! Thus doth man act by his fellow, knowing him to be innocent, having received the commands of another man so to act.

Sad experience had I of Vienna, and well I knew those who had despoiled me of my property, most anxiously would endeavour to prevent my return. Such were my meditations! Such

01/29/18

my night thoughts! Day at length returned; but where was its splendor fled? I beheld it not. Yet was its glimmering obscurity sufficient to show me what was my dungeon.

In breadth it was about eight feet; in length, ten. Near me once more stood a night table; in a corner was a seat four bricks broad, on which I might sit, and recline against the wall. Opposite the ring to which I was fastened, the light was admitted through a semi-circular aperture, one foot high, and two in diameter. This aperture ascended to the centre of the wall, which was six feet thick, and at its central part was a close iron grating, from which, outward, the aperture descended, and its two extremities were again secured by strong iron bars. My dungeon was built in the ditch of the fortification and the aperture, by which the light entered, was so covered by the wall of the rampart, that, instead of finding immediate passage, the light only gained admission by reflection. This, considering the smallness of the aperture, and the impediments of grating and iron bars, must needs make the obscurity great, yet my eyes, in time, became so accustomed to this glimmering, that I could see a mouse run. In winter, however, when the sun did not shine in the ditch, it was eternal night with me. Between the bars and the grating was a glass window, with a small central casement, which might be opened to admit air. My night table was daily removed, and beside me stood a jug of water. The name of Trenck was built in the wall, in red brick, and under my feet was a tomb-stone, with the name of Trenck also cut on it, and carved with a death's head. The doors to my dungeon were double, of oak, two inches thick; without these there was an open space, or front cell, in which was a window, and this space was likewise shut in by double doors. The ditch in which this dreadful den was built was enclosed, on both sides, by palisades twelve feet high, the key of the door of which was entrusted to the officer of the guard, it being the king's intention to prevent all possibility of speech or communication with the sentinels. The only motion I had the power to make, was that of jumping upwards, or swinging my arms, to procure myself warmth. When more accustomed to these fetters, I was like-

wine capable of moving from side to side, about four feet; but this pained my shin bones.

The cell had been finished with lime and plaster but eleven days, and every body supposed it would be impossible I should exist in these damps above a fortnight. I remained six months continuously immersed in water, that trickled upon me from the brick arches under which I was; and I can safely affirm, that for the first three months, I was never dry; yet did I continue in health. I was visited daily at noon, after relieving guard, and the doors were then obliged to be left open some minutes, otherwise the dampness of the air put out their candles.

This was my situation, and here I sat, destitute of friends, helplessly wretched, preyed on by all the torture of thought, that continually suggested the most gloomy, the most dreadful of images. My heart was not yet wholly turned to stone, my fortitude was wholly sunken to despondency; my dungeon was the very cave of despair, yet was my arm restrained; yet was this excess of misery endured.

How then, may hope be wholly eradicated from the heart of man! My fortitude, after some time, began to revive: I glowed with the desire of convincing the world I was capable of suffering what man had never before suffered; perhaps, of at last emerging from this load of wretchedness, triumphant over my enemies.

So long, and ardently, did my fancy dwell on this picture, that my mind at length acquired a heroism which Socrates himself certainly never possessed.

Age had benumbed his sense of pleasure, and he drank the poisonous draught with cool indifference. I was young, inured to high hopes, yet now beholding deliverance impossible, or at an immense, a dreadful distance. Such, too, were the sufferings of soul and body, I could not hope they might be supported and lived.

About noon, my den was opened. Sorrow and compassion were painted on the countenances of my keepers. No one spoke. No one bid me good morrow.

Dreadful indeed, was their arrival; for, unconstrained to the

monstrous bolts and bars, they kept resounding, for a full half hour, before such soul-chilling, such hope-murdering impediments were removed. It was the voice of tyranny that thundered!

My night-table was taken out; a camp bed, mattress and blankets were brought me; a jug of water set down, and beside it an ammunition loaf of six pounds weight. "That you may no more complain of hunger," said the town-major, "you shall have as much bread as you can eat." The door was shut, and I again left to my thoughts.

What a strange thing is that called happiness! How shall I express my extreme joy, when, after eleven months of intolerable hunger, I was again indulged with a full feast of ammunition bread? The fond lover never rushed more eagerly to the arms of his expecting bride; the famished tiger more ravenously on his prey, than I upon this loaf! I ate, rested, surveyed the precious morsel, ate again, and absolutely shed tears of pleasure. Breaking bit after bit, I had, by evening, devoured all my loaf.

Oh Nature! what delight hast thou combined with the gratification of thy wants! Remember this, ye who rack invention to excite appetite, and which yet you can not procure; remember how simple are the means that will give a crust of mouldy bread a flavor more exquisite than all the spices of the East, or all the profusions of land or sea; remember this, grow hungry, and indulge your sensuality.

Alas! my enjoyment was of short duration. I soon found that excess is followed by pain and repentance. My fasting had weakened digestion, and rendered it inactive. My body swelled, my water jug was emptied, cramps, colics, and, at length, inordinate thirst racked me all the night. I began to pour curses on those who seem to refine on torture, and after starving me so long, to invite me to gluttony. Could I not have reclined on my bed, I should indeed have been driven this night to desperation; yet, even this was but a partial relief; for, not accustomed to my enormous fasters, I could not extend myself in them in the same manner I was afterwards taught to do by habit. I dragged them, however, so together, as to enable me to sit down on the bare mattress. This, of all my nights of

suffering, stands foremost. When they opened my dungeons next day, they found me in a truly pitiable situation, wondered at my appetite, brought me another loaf, I refused to accept it, believing I never more should have occasion for bread; they, however, left me one; gave me water, shrugged up their shoulders, wished me farewell, as, according to all appearance, they never expected to find me alive, and shut all the doors, without asking whether I wished or needed farther assistance.

Three days had passed before I could again eat a morsel of bread. Brave in health, now, in a sick body, I became pusillanimous, so I determined on death. The irons were every where round my body, and their weight was insupportable; nor could I imagine it was possible I should habituate myself to them, or endure them long enough to expect deliverance; peace was a very distant prospect. The king had commanded that such a prison should be built as should exclude all necessity of a sentinel, in order that I might not converse with and seduce them from their duty; and in the first days of despair, deliverance appeared impossible, and the fetters, the war, the pain I felt, the place, the length of time, each circumstance seemed equally impossible to support. A thousand reasons convinced me it was necessary to end my sufferings. I shall not enter into theological disputes, let those who blame me imagine themselves in my situation; or rather, let them first actually endure my miseries, and then let them reason. I had often braved death in prosperity, and at this moment it seemed a blessing.

Full of these meditations, every man's patience appeared absurdity, and resolution meanness of soul; yet I wished my mind should be satisfied that reason, and not rashness, had induced the act. I therefore determined, that I might examine the question coolly, to wait a week longer, and die on the 4th of July. In the mean time I revolved in my mind what possibility there was of escape, not fearing, naked and chained, to rush and expire on the bayonets of my enemies.

The next day I observed, as four doors were opened, that they were of wood, therefore questioned whether I might not even cut off the locks with the knife that I had so fortunately con-

escape, and should this, and every other means fail, then would be the time to die. I likewise determined to make an attempt even to free myself of my chains. I happily forced my right hand through the handcuff, though the blood trickled from my nails. My attempts on the left were long ineffectual, but, by rubbing with a brick, which I got from my seat, on the rivet that had been negligently closed, I effected this also.

The chain was fastened to the rim round my body by a hook, one end of which was not inserted in the rim, therefore by setting my foot against the wall, I had strength enough so far to bend this hook back, and open it, as to force out the link of the chain. The remaining difficulty was the chain that attached my foot to the wall; the links of this I took, doubled, twisted, and wrenched, till at length, nature having bestowed on me great strength, I made a desperate effort, sprang forcibly up, and two links at once flew off.

Fortunate indeed did I think myself; I hastened to the door, groped in the dark to find the clinchings of the nails by which the lock was fastened, and discovered no very large piece of wood need be cut. Immediately I went to work with my knife, and cut the oak door to find its thickness, which proved to be only one inch, therefore it was possible to open all the four doors in four and twenty hours.

Again hope revived in my heart. To prevent detection, I hastened to put on my chains; but, Oh God! what difficulties had I to surmount! After much groping about, I at length found the link that had flown off; this I hid. It had been my good fortune hitherto to escape examination, as the possibility of ridding myself of such chains was in no wise suspected.

The separated links I tied together with my hair ribbon: but, when I again endeavored to force my hand into the ring, it was so swelled that every effort was fruitless. The whole night was employed upon the rivet, but all labor was in vain.

Noon was the hour of visitation, and necessity and danger again obliged me to attempt forcing my hand in, which at length, after excruciating torture, I effected. My visitors came, and every thing had the appearance of order. I found it, however,

impossible to force out my right hand while it continued swelled.

I therefore remained quiet till the day fixed, and on the determined fourth of July, immediately as my visitors had closed the doors upon me, I disencumbered myself from my irons, took my knife and began my Herculean labor on the door. The first of the double doors that opened inwards, was conquered in less than an hour; the other was a very different task. The lock was soon cut round, but it opened outwards; there were, therefore, no other means left, but to cut the whole door away above the bar.

This incessant and incredible labor made it possible, though it was more difficult, as every thing was done by feeling, I being totally in the dark; the sweat dropped, or rather flowed from my body; my fingers were clotted with my own blood, and my lacerated hands were one continued wound.

Day light appeared; I clambered over the door that was cut half away, and got up to the window in the space or cell that was between the double doors, as before described. Here I saw my dungeon was in the ditch of the first rampart; before me I beheld the road from the rampart, the guard but fifty paces distant, and the high palisados that were in the ditch, and must be scaled before I could reach the rampart. Hope grew stronger; my efforts were redoubled. The first of the next double doors was attacked, which likewise opened inward, and was soon conquered. The sun set before I had ended this, and the fourth was to be cut away, as the second had been. My strength failed; both my hands were raw; I rested a while, began again, and had made a cut of a foot long, when my knife snapped, and the broken blade dropped to the ground.

* * * * *

God of Omnipotence! what was I at this moment? Was there, God of mercies! was there ever creature of thine more justified than I in despair? The moon shone clear; I cast a wild distracted look up to Heaven, fell on my knees, and in the agony of my soul sought comfort, but no comfort could be found, nor religion, nor philosophy had any to give. I cursed not providence,

I feared not annihilation, I dared not Almighty vengeance; God the creator, was the disposer of my fate; and if he heaped afflictions upon me he had not given me strength to support, his justice would not therefore punish me. To him, the judge of the quick and the dead, I committed my soul, seized the broken knife, gashed through the veins of my left arm and foot, sat myself tranquilly down, and saw the blood flow. Nature overpowered, I fainted, and know not how long I remained slumbering in this state. Suddenly I heard my own name, awoke, and again heard the words, Baron Trenck! My answer was, *who calls?* And who indeed was it? who but my honest grenadier, *Gefhardt*, my former faithful friend in the citadel! The good, the kind fellow, had got upon the rampart that he might comfort me.

"How do you do?" said *Gefhardt*. "Weltering in my blood," answered I, "to-morrow you will find me dead." "Why should you die?" replied he, "It is much easier for you to escape here than at the citadel. Here is no sentinel, and I shall soon find means to provide you with tools; if you can only break out, leave the rest to me. As often as I am on guard I will seek opportunity to speak to you. In the whole Star Fort there are but two sentinels, the one at the entrance, and the other at the guard house. Do not despair, God will succor you; trust to me." The good man's kindness and discourse revived my hopes. A secret joy diffused itself through my soul. I immediately tore my shirt, bound up my wounds, and waited the approach of day, and the sun, soon after, shone through the window to me with unaccustomed brightness.

Let the reader judge how far it was chance, how far the effect of divine providence, that in this dreadful hour my heart again received hope. Who was it sent the honest *Gefhardt* at such a moment to my prison? For, had it not been for him, I had certainly, when I awoke from my slumbers, cut more effectually through my arteries. Till noon I had time to consider what might further be done; yet, what could be done, what expected, but that I should now be much more cruelly treated, and even insupportably ironed than before; finding, as they must, the doors out through, and my fetters shaken off.

After mature consideration, I therefore made the following resolution, which succeeded admirably, and even beyond my hopes. Before I proceed, however, I will speak a few words concerning my then situation. It is impossible to describe how much I was exhausted. The prison swam with blood, and, certainly, there was but little left in my body. With painful wounds, swollen and torn hands, I there stood shirtless, felt an inclination to sleep almost irresistible, and scarcely had strength to keep my legs, yet I was obliged to rouse myself, that I might execute my plan.

With the bar that separated my hands, I loosened the bricks of my seat, which being newly laid was easily done, and heaped them up in the middle of my prison. The inner door was quite open, and with my chains I so barricaded the upper half of the second, as to prevent any one climbing over it. When noon came, and the first of the doors was unlocked, all were astonished to find the second open. There I stood, a desperate man, besmeared with blood, the picture of horror, with a brick in one hand, and in the other my broken knife, crying, as they approached: "Keep off, Mr. Major, keep off! Tell the governor I will live no longer in chains, and that here I stand, if he so pleases, to be shot, for so only will I be conquered. Here no man shall enter, I will destroy all that approach, here are my weapons, here will I die in despite of tyranny." The major was terrified, wanted resolution, and made his report to the governor. I, mean time, sat down on my bricks, to wait what might happen; my secret intent, however, was not so desperate as it appeared; I sought only to obtain a favorable capitulation.

The governor General Borck, presently came, attended by the town major and several officers, and entered the outward cell, but sprang back the moment he beheld a figure like me, standing with a brick and uplifted arm. I repeated what I had told the major, and he immediately ordered six grenadiers to force the door. The front cell was scarcely six feet broad, so that no more than two at a time could attack my entrenchment, and when they saw my threatening bricks ready to descend, they leaped, terrified, back. A short pause ensued, and the old town

major, with the chaplain, endeavored to soothe me; the conversation continued some time. Whose reasons were most satisfactory, and whose cause was the most just, I leave to the reader. The governor grew angry and ordered a fresh attack. The first grenadier was knocked down, and the rest ran back to avoid my missiles.

The town major again began a parley: "For God's sake, my dear Trenck," said he, "in what have I injured you that you endeavor to effect my ruin? I must answer for your having, through my negligence, concealed a knife. Be persuaded, I entreat you, be appeased. You are not without hope nor friends." My answer was, "but will you not load me with heavier irons than before?"

He went out, spoke with the governor, and gave me his word of honor, that the affair should be no further noticed, and that every thing should be exactly reinstated as formerly.

Here ended the capitulation, and my wretched citadel was taken. The condition I was in, was viewed with pity, my wounds were examined, a surgeon sent to dress them, another shirt was given me, and the bricks, clotted with blood, removed. I, mean time, lay half dead on my mattress; my thirst was excessive, the surgeon ordered me some wine; two sentinels were stationed in the front cell, and I was thus left four days in peace, unironed. Broth was also given me daily, and how delicious was this to taste, how much it revived and strengthened me, is wholly impossible to describe. Two days I lay in a slumbering kind of trance, forced by unquenchable thirst to drink whenever I awoke. My hands and feet were swelled; the pains in my back and limbs were excessive.

On the fifth day the doors were ready, the inner was entirely plated with iron, and I was fettered as before; perhaps they found further cruelty unnecessary. The principal chain, however, which fastened me to the wall like that which had before broken, was thicker than the first. They deeply regretted, that, without the king's express commands, they could not lighten my afflictions—wished me fortitude and patience, and barred my doors.

It is necessary I should here describe my dress. My hands being fixed and kept asunder by an iron bar, and my feet chained to the wall, I could neither put on my shirt nor stockings in the usual mode; the shirt was therefore tied, and changed once a fortnight—stockings buttoned on the sides; a blue garment of soldier's cloth was tied round me, and I had a pair of slippers for my feet. The shirt was of the army linen, and when I contemplated myself in this dress of a malefactor, chained thus to the wall, in such a dungeon, vainly imploring mercy and justice, my conscience void of reproach, my heart of guilt, when I reflected on my former splendor in Berlin and Moscow, and compared it with this sad, this dreadful reverse of destiny, I was sunk in grief, or roused to indignation, that might have hurried the greatest hero or philosopher to madness or despair. I felt what can only be imagined by him who has suffered like me, after having like me flourished, if such can be found.

Pride, the justness of my cause, the unbounded confidence I had in my own resolution, and the labors of an inventive head and iron body, these only could have preserved my life. These bodily labors, these continued inventions, and projected plans to obtain freedom, preserved my health. Who would suppose, that a man, fettered as I was, could find means of exercising himself? By swinging my arms, acting with the upper part of my body, and leaping upward, I frequently put myself in a strong perspiration. After thus wearing myself, I slept soundly, and often thought how many generals, obliged to support all the inclemencies of weather, and the dangers of the field; how many of those who had plunged me into this den of misery, would have been most glad, could they, like me, have slept with a quiet conscience. Often did I reflect how much happier I was, than those tortured on the bed of sickness, by gout, stone, or other diseases terrible to man. How much happier was I in innocence than the malefactor, doomed to suffer the pangs of death, the ignominy of men, and the horrors of eternal guilt!

In the following part of my history, it will appear I often had much money concealed under the ground and the walls of my den, yet if I would have given a hundred ducats for a morsel of

kind, it could not have been procured. Money was to me treas-
ure. In this I resembled the miser, who hoards, yet lives in
wretchedness, having no joy in gentle acts of benevolence. As
proudly might I delight myself with my hidden treasure as such
misers, nay more, for I was secure from robbers.

Gefhardt, my honest grenadier, had infused fresh hope, and
my mind now busily began to meditate new plans. A sentinel
had been placed before my door, that I might be more narrowly
watched, and the married men of the Prussian states were
appointed to this duty, who, as I shall hereafter show, were
more easy to persuade in aiding my flight, than foreign fugitives.
The Pomeranian will listen, and is kind-natured, therefore may
easily be moved, and induced to succor distress.

I began to be more accustomed to my iron, which I before
found so insupportable; I could comb out my long hair, and
could tie it at last with one hand. My beard, which had so long
remained unshaven, gave me a grim appearance, and I began to
pluck it out by the roots. The pain was at first considerable,
especially round the lips; but this also custom conquered, and I
performed this operation in the following years, once in six
weeks, or two months; as the hair thus plucked up, required
that length of time before the nails could again get hold. Ver-
min did not molest me; the dampness of my den was inimical to
them. My limbs never swelled, because of the exercise I gave
myself, as before described. The greatest pain I found, was in
the continual unvivifying dampness in which I lived.

I had read much, I had loved it, and seen much of the world;
vacuity of thought, therefore, I was little troubled with; the
former transactions of my life; what had happened, and the
remembrance of the persons I had known, I revolved so often
in my mind, that they became as familiar and connected as if
the events had each been written in the order it occurred. Habit
made this mental exercise so perfect to me, that I could compose
speeches, fables, odes, satires, all of which I repeated aloud, and
had so stored my memory with them, that I was enabled, after I
had obtained my freedom, to commit to writing two volumes of
these my prison labors.

The greatest of all my incitements to patient endurance, was love. I had left behind me, in Vienna, a lady, for whom the world was still dear to me; her I would neither desert nor afflict. To her and my sister, was my existence still necessary.

About three weeks after my attempt to escape, the good Gefhardt first came to stand sentinel over me: and the sentinel they had so carefully set was, indeed, the only hope I could have of escape, for help must be had from without, or this was impossible.

The efforts I had made excited too much surprise and alarm for me to pass without strict examination, since on the ninth day after I was confined I had, in eighteen hours, so far broken through a prison built purposely for myself, by a combination of so many projectors, and with such precaution, which prison had universally been declared impenetrable.

Gefhardt had scarcely taken his post before we had free opportunity of conversing together; for when I stood with one foot on my bedstead I could reach the aperture through which light was admitted.

Gefhardt described the situation of my dungeon, and our first plan was to break through the foundation, which he had seen laid, and which he affirmed to be only two feet deep.

Money was the first necessary. Gefhardt was relieved during his guard, and returned, bringing with him a sheet of paper, rolled on wire, which he passed through my grating; after which a piece of small wax candle, some burning amadone, a kind of tinder, a match and pen. I now had light, pricked my finger, and wrote, with my blood, to my good friend, Capt. Ruckhardt, at Vienna, described my situation in a few words, sent him an acquittance for three thousand florins on my revenues, and requested he would dispose of a thousand florins to defray the expenses of his journey to Gummern, only two miles from Magdebourg. Here he was to positively be on the 13th of August. About noon, on the same day, he was to walk, with a letter in his hand; a man was there to meet him, smoking a roll of tobacco, to whom he was to remit the two thousand florins, and return to Vienna.

I returned the written paper to Gefhardt, by the same means

It had been received, gave him my instructions, and he sent his wife with it to Gummern, by whom it was safely put in the post. My hopes daily rose, and as often as Gefhardt mounted guard, so often did we continue our projections. The 13th of August came, but it was some days before Gefhardt was again on guard, and oh! how did my heart palpitate when he came and exclaimed, "all is right, we have succeeded." He returned in the evening, and we began to consider by what means he should convey the money to me. I could not, with my hands chained to an iron bar, reach to the aperture of the window that admitted air, besides that it was too small. It was therefore agreed that Gefhardt should, on the next guard, perform the office of cleaning my dungeon, and that he then should convey the money to me in the water jug.

This luckily was done. How great was my astonishment when, instead of one, I found two thousand florins! For I had permitted him to reserve half to himself, as a reward for his fidelity. He, however, had kept but five pistoles, which he persisted was enough.

Worthy Gefhardt! his was the act of a Pomeranian grenadier!
how rare are such examples! Be thy name and mine ever united. Live thou while the memory of me shall live. Never did my acquaintance with the great bring to my knowledge a soul so noble, so disinterested. It is true, I afterwards prevailed on him to accept the whole thousand; but we shall soon see he never had them, and that his foolish wife, three years after, suffered by their means; however, she suffered alone, for he soon marched to the field, and therefore was unpunished.

Having money to carry on my designs, I began to put my plan, of burrowing under the foundation, into execution. The first thing necessary, was to free myself from my fetters. To accomplish this, Gefhardt supplied me with two small files, and by the aid of these this labor, though great, was effected.

The cap, or staple of the foot ring was made so wide, that I could draw it forward a quarter of an inch; I filed the iron which passed through it on the inside, and the more I filed this away, the further I could draw the cap down, till at last, the whole in-

side iron, through which the chain passed, was quite cut through; by this means I could slip off the ring, while the cap on the outside continued whole, and it was impossible to discover my cut, as only the outside could be examined. (My hands, by continued efforts, I so compressed, as to be able to draw them out of the handcuffs.) I then filed the hinge and made a screw-driver of one of the foot long flooring nails, by which I could take out the screws at pleasure, so that at the time of examination, no proofs could appear. The rim round my body was but a small impediment, except the chain, which passed from my hand bar, and that I removed by filing an aperture in one of the links, which, at the necessary hour was readily replaced; and would wager any sum that, without striking the chain, link by link with a hammer, no one, not in the secret, would have discovered this fracture.

The window was never strictly examined; I therefore drew the two staples by which the iron bars were fixed to the wall, and which I daily replaced, carefully plastering them over. I procured wire from Gefhardt, and tried how well I could imitate our inner grating; finding I succeeded tolerably, I cut the real grating totally away, and substituted an artificial, one of my own fabricating, by which I obtained a free communication with the outside, additional fresh air, together with all necessary implements, tinder and candles. That the light might not be seen, I hung the coverlet of my bed before my window, so that I could work fearless and undetected.

Every thing prepared, I went to work. The floor of my dungeon was not of stone, but oak planks three inches thick; three beds of which were laid cross-wise and fastened to each other by nails half an inch in diameter, and a foot long. Having worked round the head of a nail, I made use of the hole at the end of the bar which separated my hands to draw it out, and this nail I sharpened upon my tombstone into an excellent chisel.

I now cut through the board more than an inch in width, that I might work downward, and having drawn away a piece of board which was inserted two inches under the wall, I cut this so

02/04/18

as exactly to fit; the small crevice it occasioned, I stopped with bread, and strewed over with dust, so as to prevent all suspicious appearances. My labor under this was continued with less precaution, and I had soon worked through my nine-inch plank. Under them I came to a fine white sand, on which the Star Fort was built. My chips I distributed beneath the boards. If I had not help from without, I could proceed no farther, for to dig was useless, unless I could rid myself of the rubbish. Gefhardt supplied me with some ells of cloths, of which I made long narrow bags, stuffed them with earth, and passed them between the iron bars to Gefhardt, who, as often as he was on guard, scattered or conveyed away their contents.

Furnished with room to secrete them under the floor, I obtained more instruments, together with a pair of pistols, powder, ball, and a bayonet.

I now discovered that the foundation of my prison, instead of two, was sunk four feet deep. Time, labor and patience, were all necessary to break out unheard and undiscovered; but few things are impossible, where resolution is not wanting.

The hole I made was obliged to be four feet deep, corresponding with the foundation, and wide enough to kneel and stoop in; the laying down on the floor to throw out the earth, the narrow space in which all must be performed, these made the labor incredible; and after this daily labor, all things were to be replaced, and my chains again resumed, which alone required some hours to effect. My great aid was in the wax candles and light I had procured; but as Gefhardt stood sentinel only once a fortnight, my work was much delayed; the sentinels were forbidden to speak to me under pain of death; and I was too fearful of being betrayed, to dare to seek new assistance.

Being without a stove, I suffered much this winter from cold, yet my heart was cheerful, as I saw the possibility of freedom; and all were astonished to find me in such good spirits.

Gefhardt also brought me supplies of provisions, chiefly consisting of sausages and salt meats; ready dressed, which increased my strength, and when I was not digging I wrote satires and verses; thus time was employed, and I contented even in a prison.

"While I was imprisoned in the citadel, a sentinel came to the post under my window, cursed and blasphemed, exclaiming aloud: "Damn the Prussian service, if Trenck only knew my mind, he would not long continue in this infernal hole!" He entered into discourse with him, and he told me if I could give him money to purchase a boat, in which he might cross the Elbe, he would soon make my doors fly open, and set me free. Money at that time I had none, but I gave him a diamond shirt buckle, worth 500 florins, which I had concealed. I never heard more of this man, he spake to me no more. He often stood sentinel over me, which I knew by his Westphalian dialect, and I as often addressed myself to him ineffectually. He would make me no answer.

This Shutz must have sold my buckle, and let his riches be seen, for when the duke left me, the lieutenant on guard said to him, "You must certainly be the rascal who carried Trenck's letter, you have for some time past spent much money, and we have seen you with louis d'ors. How came you by them?" Shutz was terrified, his conscience accused him; he imagined I had betrayed him, he having deceived me; he, therefore, in the first agonies of despair, came to the palisados, and hung himself before my dungeon.

The enormous iron round my neck pained me, and prevented motion, and I durst not attempt to disengage myself from the pendant chains, till I had, for some months, carefully observed the mode of examination, and what parts they supposed were secure. The cruelty of depriving me of my bed was still greater. I was obliged to sit upon the bare ground, and lean with my head against the damp walls. The chains that descended from the neck collar were obliged to be supported, first with one hand, and then with the other; for if thrown behind, they would have strangled me, and if hanging forward occasioned most excessive head aches. The bar between my hands, held one down, while leaning on my elbow. I supported with the other, my chains, and this so benumbed the muscles, and prevented circulation, that I could perceive my arms sensibly waste away. The little sleep I could have in such a situation, may be easily sup-

posed, and at length, body and mind sunk under this accumulation of miserable suffering, and I fell ill of a burning fever.

The tyrant Borck was inexorable, he wished to expedite my death, and rid himself of his troubles and terrors. Here did I experience what was the lamentable condition of a sick prisoner, without bed, refreshment, or aid from human being. Reason, fortitude, heroism, all the noble qualities of the mind, decay when the corporeal faculties are diseased, and the remembrance of my sufferings, at this dreadful moment, still agitates, still inflames my blood, so as almost to prevent an attempt to describe what they were.

Yet hope had not totally forsaken me. Deliverance seemed possible, especially should peace ensue; and I sustained, perhaps, what mortal man never bore, except myself, being, as I was, provided with pistols, or any such immediate mode of dispatch. I continued ill about two months, and was so reduced at last that I had scarcely strength to lift the water jug to my mouth. What must the sufferings of that man be, who sits two months on the bare ground, in a dungeon, so damp, so dark, so horrible, without bed or straw, his limbs loaded as mine were; with no refreshment but dry ammunition bread; without so much as a drop of broth—without a consoling friend, and who under all these afflictions must trust for his recovery to the efforts of nature alone!

Sickness, itself, is sufficient to humble the mightiest man; what then is sickness, with such addition of torment? The burning fever, the violent head aches, my neck, swelled and inflamed with the irons, enraged me almost to madness. The fever and the fetters, together, flayed my body so that it appeared like one continued wound. Enough! Enough! The malefactor extended living on the wheel, to whom the executioner refuses the last stroke, the blow of death, must yet in some short period expire; he suffers nothing I did not then suffer; and these my excruciating pangs continued two dreadful months. Yet, can it be supposed? there came a day, a day of horror, when these pangs were beyond imagination increased! I sat, scorched with this intolerable fever, in which nature and death were contending,

and when attempting to quench my burning entrails with cold water, the jug dropped from my feeble hands and broke? I had four and twenty hours to remain without water.

Willingly would I have seized my pistols, but strength had forsaken me; I could not open the place I was obliged to render so secure.

My visitors next day supposed me gone at last; I lay motionless, with my tongue out of my mouth. They poured water down my throat and found life. Oh God! Oh God! how pure, how delicious, how exquisite was this water! My insatiable thirst soon emptied the jug, they filled it anew, bade me farewell, hoped death would soon relieve my mortal sufferings, and departed. The lamentable state in which I lay, at length became so much the subject of general conversation, that all the ladies of the town united with the officers, and prevailed on the tyrant Borck to restore me my bed. Oh Nature, what are thy operations! From the day I drank water in such excess, I gathered strength, and, to the astonishment of every one, soon recovered. I had moved the heart of the officer who inspected my prison, and after six months, six cruel months of added misery, the day of hope began to dawn.

One of the majors of the day entrusted his key to Lieut. Sontag, who came alone, spoke in confidence, and related his own situation; complained of his debts, his poverty, his necessities; and I made him a present of twenty-five louis d'ors, for which he was so grateful that our friendship became unshaken.

The three lieutenants all commiserated me, and would sit hours with me when a certain major had the inspection; and he himself, after a time, would pass half the day with me. He too was poor, and I gave him a draft for three thousand florins; hence new objects took birth.

Lieutenant Sontag got false handcuffs made for me, that were so wide I could easily draw my hands out; the lieutenants only examined my irons; the new handcuffs were made perfectly similar to the old, and Bruckhausen had too much stupidity to remark any difference.

Of the remainder of my chains I could disencumber myself at pleasure. When I examined myself, I held them in my hands, that the sentinels might be deceived by their clanking. The neck iron was the only one I dare not remove; it was likewise too strongly riveted. I filed through the upper link of the pendant chain, however, by which means I could take it off, and this I concealed with bread, in the manner I before mentioned.

So could I disencumber myself of most of my fetters, and sleep at ease. I again obtained sausages and cold meat, and thus my situation, bad as it was, still became less miserable. Liberty, still, however, was most desirable; but alas! none of the three lieutenants had the courage of a Schell; Saxony, too, was in the hands of the Prussians, and flight therefore most dangerous. Persuasion was in vain, with men determined to risk nothing; but if they went, to go in safety. Will, indeed, was not wanting with Glotin and Sontag; but the first was a poltroon, and the latter a man of scruples, who likewise thought this step might be the ruin of his brother in Berlin.

The sentinels were doubled, therefore my escape through my hole, which had been two years dug, could not, unperceived by them, be effected; much less could I, in the face of the guard, clamber over the twelve feet high palisades. The following labor, therefore, though Herculean, was undertaken.

Lieutenant Sontag, measuring the hole I had dug, and the entrance of the gallery in the principal rampart, found it to be thirty-seven feet. Into this it was possible I might, by mining, penetrate. The difficulty of the enterprise was lessened by the nature of the ground, a fine white sand. Could I reach the gallery, my freedom was certain. I had been informed how many steps to the right or left must be taken to find the door that led to the second rampart; and on the day when I should be ready for flight, the officer was secretly to leave this door open. I had light and mining tools, and I was further to rely on money and my own discretion.

I began and continued this labor about six months. I have already noticed the difficulty of scraping out the earth with my

02/04/18

hands. The noise of instruments would have been heard by the sentinels; I had scarcely mined beyond my dungeon wall before I discovered the foundation of the rampart was not more than a foot deep; a capital error, certainly, in so important a fortress. My labor became the lighter, as I could remove the foundation stones of my dungeon, and was not obliged to mine so deep.

My work proceeded so rapidly, that, while I had room to throw back my sand, I was able, in one night, to gain three feet; but ere I had proceeded ten feet, I discovered all my difficulties. Before I could continue my work, I was obliged to make room for myself, by emptying the sand out of my hole upon the floor of my prison, and this itself was an employment of some hours. The sand was obliged to be thrown out by hand, and after it thus lay heaped in my prison must again be returned into the hole; and I have calculated, that, after I had proceeded twenty feet, I was obliged to creep under ground, in my hole, from 1500 to 2000 fathoms, within twenty-four hours, in the removal and replacing of sand. This labor ended, care was to be taken, that in none of the crevices of the floor there might be any appearance of this fine white sand. The flooring was next to be exactly replaced, and my chains to be resumed. So severe was the fatigue of one day, in this mode, that I was always obliged to rest the three following.

To reduce my labor as much as possible, I was constrained to make the passage so small, that my body only had space to pass, and I had not room to draw my arm back to my head. The work, too, must all be done naked, otherwise the dirtiness of my shirt must have been remarked, as the sand was wet, water being found at the depth of four feet, where the stratum of gravel began. At length the expedient of sand bags occurred to me, by which it might be removed out more expeditiously. I obtained linen from the officers, but not in sufficient quantities; suspicions would have been excited at observing so much linen brought into the prison. At last I took my sheets and ticking that enclosed the straw, and cut them up for sand bags, taking care to lie down on my bed as if ill, when Bruckhausen paid his visit

AMAZING

The labor, towards the conclusion, became so intolerable as to excite despondency. I frequently sat contemplating the heaps of sand, during a momentary respite from work, and thinking it impossible I could have strength or time again to replace all things as they were, resolving patiently to wait the consequence, and leave every thing in its present disorder. No, I can assure the reader that to effect concealment, I have scarcely had time, in twenty-four hours, to sit down and eat a morsel of bread. Recollecting, however, the prodigious efforts, and all the progress I had made, hope would again revive, and exhausted strength return: again would I begin my labors, that I might preserve my secret and my expectations; yet it has frequently happened that my visitors have entered a few minutes after I had reinstated every thing in its place.

When my work was within six or seven feet of being accomplished, a new misfortune happened, that at once frustrated all further attempts. I worked, as I have said, under the foundation of the rampart, near where the sentinels stood. I could disencumber myself of my fetters, except my neck collar, and its pendant chain. This, as I worked, though it had been fastened, got loose, and the clanking was heard by one of the sentinels, about fifteen feet from my dungeon. The officers were called, they laid their ears to the ground, and heard me as I went backward and forward to bring my earth-bags. This was reported the next day, and the major, who was my best friend, with the town major, and a smith and a mason, entered my prison. I was terrified. The lieutenant, by a sign, gave me to understand I was discovered. An examination was begun, but the officers would not see, and the smith and mason found every thing, as they thought, safe. Had they examined my bed, they would have seen the ticking and sheets were gone.

The town major was a dull man, was persuaded the thing was impossible, and said to the sentinel, "Blockhead, you have heard some mole under ground, and not Trenck. How indeed could it be, that he should work under ground at such a distance from his dungeon!" Here the scrutiny ended.

There was now no time for delay. Had they altered their hour of coming, they must have found me at work; but this during ten years never happened, for the governor and town major were stupid men, and the others, wishing me all success, were willfully blind. In a few days I could have broken out, but when prepared, wished to wait for the visitation day of the man who had treated me so tyrannically, Bruckhausen, that his own negligence might be evident: but this man, though he wanted understanding, did not want good fortune. He was ill for some time, and his duty devolved on K——.

He recovered, and the visitation being over, the doors were no sooner barred, than I began my supposed last labor. I had only three feet further to proceed, and it was no longer necessary I should bring out the sand, I having room enough to throw it behind me. What my anxiety was, what my exertions were, may well be imagined. My evil genius, however, had decreed that the same sentinel who had heard me before, should be that day on guard. He was piqued by vanity to prove he was not the blockhead he had been called; he again laid his ear to the ground, and heard me burrowing. He called his comrades first, next the major; he came and heard me likewise: accordingly they went without the pallisades, and heard me working near the door, at which place I was to break into the gallery. This door they immediately opened, entered the gallery with lanterns, and waited to catch the hunted fox when unearthed.

Through the first small breach I made, I perceived a light, and saw the heads of those who were expecting me. This was indeed a thunder stroke: I crept back, made my way through the sand I had cast behind me, and waited my fate with shuddering! I had still the presence of mind to conceal my pistols, candles, paper, and some money, under the floor, which I could remove. The money was disposed of in various holes, well concealed, also between the panels of the doors; under different cracks in the floor I hid my small files and knives.

Scarcely were these disposed of before the doors resounded: the floor was covered with sand bags; my handcuffs, however,

and the separating bar, I had hastily resumed, that they might suppose I had worked with them on, which they were silly enough to credit, highly to my future advantage.

No man was so busy on this occasion as the brutal and stupid Bruckhausen, who put many interrogatories, to which I made no reply, except assuring him that I should have completed my work some days sooner, had it not been his good fortune to fall sick, and that this only had been the cause of my failure.

The man was absolutely terrified with apprehension; he began to fear me, grew more polite, and even supposed nothing was impossible to me.

It was too late to remove the sand, therefore the lieutenant and guard continued with me, so that, this night at least, I did not want company. When the morning came, the hole was first filled and walled up: the plank was renewed. The tyrant Borok was ill, and could not come, otherwise my treatment would have been still more lamentable. The smiths had ended before the evening, and the irons were heavier than ever. The foot chains, instead of being fastened as before, were screwed and riveted; all things else remained as formerly. They were employed in the flooring till the next day, so that I could not sleep, and at last I sunk down with weariness.

The greatest of my misfortunes was, they again deprived me of my bed, because I had cut it up for sand bags. Before the doors were barred, Bruckhausen and another major examined my body very narrowly. They often asked me where I concealed all my implements? My answer was, "Gentlemen, Beelzebub is my best and most intimate friend; he brings me every thing I want, supplies me with light, we play whole nights at picquet, and, guard me as you please, he will finally deliver me out of your power."

Some were astonished, others laughed. At length as they were barring the last door, I called, "Come back, gentlemen, you have forgotten something of great importance." In the interim I had taken up one of my hidden files. When they returned, "Look ye, gentlemen," said I, "here is a proof of the

friendship Beelzebub has for me; he has brought me this in a twinkling." Again they examined, and again they shut the doors. While they were so doing, I took out a knife and ten louis d'ors, called, and they returned, grumbling curses. I then showed them the knife and the louis d'ors. Their consternation was excessive; and diverted my misfortunes, by jesting at such a blundering, short-sighted keeper. It was soon rumored through Magdebourg, especially among the simple and vulgar, that I was a magician, to whom the devil brought all I asked.

One major Holtzkammer, a very selfish man, profited by this report. A foolish citizen had offered him fifty dollars, if he might only be permitted to see me through the door, being very desirous to have a peep at a wizard. Holtzkammer told me, and we jointly determined to sport with his credulity. The major gave me a mask, with a monstrous nose, which I put on when the doors were opened, and threw myself into a heroic attitude. The affrighted burgher drew back, but Holtzkammer stopped him, and said, have patience but for one quarter of an hour, and you shall see he will assume quite a different countenance. The burgher waited; my mask was thrown by, and my face appeared whitened with chalk, and made ghastly. The burgher again shrunk back! Holtzkammer kept him in conversation, and I assumed a third farcical form. I tied my hair under my nose, and a pewter dish to my breast, and when the door a third time opened, I thundered, "Begone, rascals, or I'll set your necks awry!" They both ran, and the silly burgher, eased of his fifty dollars, scampered first.

The major in vain laid his injunctions on the burgher never to reveal what he had beheld, it being a breach of duty in him, to admit any person to the sight of me. In a few days, the necromancer Trenck was the theme of every ale-house in Magdebourg, and the person was named, who had seen me change my form thrice in the space of one hour. Many false and ridiculous circumstances were added, and at last the story reached the governor's ears. The citizen was cited, and offered to take his oath to the truth of what himself and the major had seen.

Holtzkammer accordingly suffered a severe reprimand, and was some days put under arrest.

I soon felt the effects of the loss of my bed, and was a second time attacked by a violent fever, which would this time have certainly consumed me, had not the officers, unknown to the governor, treated me with all possible compassion. Bruckhausen alone continued my enemy, and the slave of his orders; on his day of examination, rules and commands in all their rigor were observed, nor durst I free myself from my irons, till I had for some weeks remarked those parts on which he invariably fixed his attention. I then cut through the link, and closed up the vacancy with bread. My hands I could always draw out, especially after illness had consumed the flesh off my bones. Half a year had elapsed before I had recovered sufficient strength to undertake, anew, labors like the past.

X
X
(Necessity at length taught me the means of driving Bruckhausen from my dungeon, and of inducing him to commit his office to another. I learned his olfactory nerves were somewhat delicate; and, whenever I heard the doors unbar, I took care to stir up my night table. This made him give back, and at length he would come no farther than the door. Such are the hard expedients of a poor unhappy prisoner.)

One day he came bloated with pride, just after a courier had brought the news of victory, and spoke of the Austrians and the august person of the empress queen with so much virulence, that, at last, enraged almost to madness, I instantly snatched the sword of an officer from its sheath, and certainly should have ended him, had he not then made a hasty retreat. From that day forward, he durst no more come without guards to examine the dungeon. Two men always preceded him, with their bayonets fixed and their pieces presented, behind whom he stood at the door. This was another fortunate incident, as I dreaded only his examination.

An order came, that I should be prevented sleeping, and that the sentinels should call and wake me every quarter of an hour, which dreadful order was immediately executed. With whom

these orders originated, unexampled in the history even of tyranny, I shall not venture to say. The major, who was my friend, advised me to persist in not answering. I followed his advice, and produced this good effect, that we mutually forced each other to a capitulation; they restored me my bed, and I was obliged to reply.

A friend, whom I will never name, by the aid of one of the lieutenants, secretly visited me, and supplied me with 500 ducats. The same friend, in the year 1763, paid 4000 florins to the imperial envoy, Baron Reisdorf, at Berlin, for the furthering of my freedom, as I shall presently more fully show. Thus I had once more money. I might fill a volume with incidents attending two other efforts to escape; but I will not weary the reader's patience with too much repetition. I shall merely give an abstract of both.

When I had once more gained the officers, I made a new attempt at mining my way out. Not wanting for implements, my chains and the flooring were soon cut through, and all was so carefully replaced I was under no fear of examination. I here found my concealed money, pistols, and other necessaries; but till I had rid myself of some hundred weight of sand, it was impossible to proceed. For this purpose I made two different openings in the floor; out of the real hole I threw a great quantity of sand into my prison; after which I closed it with all possible care. I then worked at the second with so much noise that I was certain they must hear me without. About midnight the doors began to thunder, and in they came, detecting me as I intended they should. None of them could conceive why I should wish to break out under the door, where there was a triple guard to pass. The sentinels remained, and in the morning prisoners were sent to wheel the sand away. The hole was walled up and boarded, and my fetters were renewed. They laughed at the ridiculousness of my undertaking, but punished me by depriving me of my light and bed, both which, however, in a fortnight, were restored. Of the other hole, out of which most of the earth had been thrown, no one was aware. The

major and lieutenant were too much my friends to remark they had removed thrice the quantity of sand the false opening could contain. They supposed, this strange attempt having failed, it would be my last; and Bruckhausen grew negligent.

*BLOOD-
INK*

(Ink was not allowed me, I therefore pricked my finger, suffered the blood to trickle into the pot, and when coagulated warmed it again in my hands, throwing away the fibrous parts, that would not liquefy; by this means I procured a succedaneum for ink, both to write and draw.)

I waited my coming fate with a mind more at ease than that of many a prince in his palace. My dawn of hope daily grew more bright. The newspapers they brought me, foretold approaching peace, on which all my dependence was placed, and I passed eighteen months calmly, and without further attempt.

I endeavored to persuade another officer to aid my escape, but in vain; no second Schell was to be found. The will consented, but the heart recoiled.

I therefore opened my old hole, and my friends assisted me all in their power, further to disembarass myself of sand. My money melted away, but they provided me with tools, gunpowder, and a good sword. I had remained so long quiet, that my flooring was no more examined.

My passage was to be ready in case of emergency; I therefore removed the upper planking, broke up the two under beds, cut the boards into chips, and burnt them in my stove. By this I obtained so much additional room, as to proceed half way with my mine. Linen was again brought, sand bags were made, and thus I successfully proceeded to all but the last operation. Every thing was afterwards so well closed, and concealed, that I had nothing to fear from the narrowest inspection, sufficient of the under flooring being left to support the upper, and it appearing double nailed as before, to avoid suspicion, especially as the new come garrison could not know what was the original length of the planks. This severe labor reduced me again to a very feeble state of body, and by the return of the regulars I in a moment was deprived of all my friends.

I must in this place relate a dreadful accident, which I can not even now remember without shuddering, and the terror of which has often haunted my very dreams. While mining under the foundation of the ramparts, just as I was going to carry out the sand bag, I struck my foot against a stone in the wall above, which fell down and closed up the passage.

What was my horror to find myself thus buried alive! After a short time for reflection, I began to work the sand away from the side, that I might obtain room to turn round. By good fortune, there were some feet of empty space, into which I threw the sand as I worked it away; but the small quantity of air soon made it so foul, that I a thousand times wished myself dead, and made several attempts to strangle myself. Further labor began to seem impossible. Thirst almost deprived me of my senses, but as often as I put my mouth to the sand, I inhaled fresh air. My sufferings were incredible, and I imagined I passed full eight hours in this distraction of horror. Of all dreadful deaths, surely such a death as this is the most dreadful. My spirits fainted; again I somewhat recovered; again I began to labor, but the earth was as high as my chin, and I had no more space into which I might throw my sand that I might turn round. I made a more desperate effort, drew my body into a ball and turned round. I now faced the stone, which was as wide as the whole passage, but there being an opening at the top, I respired fresher air. My next labor was to root away the sand under the stone, and let it sink so that I might creep over, and by this means, at length, I once more happily arrived in my dungeon.

The morning was advanced; I sat myself down so exhausted, that I supposed it was impossible I had time or strength to cover up and conceal my hole. After half an hour's rest, however, my fortitude returned; again I went to work, and scarcely had ended before the resounding looks and bolts told of the approach of my visitors.

They found me pale as death; I complained of the head ache, and continued some days so much affected by the fatigue I sustained, that I began to imagine my lungs were impaired. After

a time, health and strength returned; but, perhaps, of all my nights of horror, this was the most horrible. I long repeatedly dreamed I was buried alive in the center of the earth; and now, though three and twenty years have elapsed, my sleep is still haunted by this vision.

After this accident, whenever I worked in my cavity, I hung a knife round my neck, that in case I should be again so enclosed, I might shorten my miseries. Over the stone that had fallen, were several others that hung tottering, under which I had several hundred times to creep. Nothing could deter me from endeavoring to obtain my liberty.

When my passage was ready, so that I could break out when I pleased, I wrote various letters to my friends at Vienna, and also an impassioned memorial to my sovereign. When the militia left Magdebourg, and the regulars returned, I took an affecting leave of my friends, who had behaved to me with so much humanity, and so benevolently supplied my wants.

My time hung heavy; every thing was carefully examined on the change of the garrison. A still stricter scrutiny might occur, and all my projects be discovered. This had nearly been effected by accident, as I shall here relate. I had two years before so tamed a mouse, that it would play round me and eat from my mouth. In this small animal, I discovered proofs of intelligence too great easily to gain belief; were I to write them, priests would rail, monks grumble, and such philosophers as suppose man alone endowed with the power of thought, allowing nothing but what they call instinct to animals, would proclaim me a fabulous writer, and my opinions heterodox to what they suppose sound philosophy. Should I live, perhaps I may hereafter publish an essay on this subject, in which this mouse and a spider will appear as remarkable characters.

This intelligent mouse had nearly been my ruin. I had diverted myself with it through the night; it had been nibbling at my door; and capering upon a trencher. The sentinel happened to hear our amusement, called the officers; they heard also, and added, all was not right in my dungeon. At day break my

MOUSE

doors resounded; the town-major, a smith and mason, entered; strict search was begun; flooring, walls, chains, and my own person were scrutinized, but in vain. They asked me what was the noise they heard? I mentioned the mouse, whistled, and it came and jumped upon my shoulder. Orders were given I should be deprived of its society; I earnestly entreated they would spare its life. The officer on guard gave me his word of honor he would present it to a lady, who would treat it with the utmost tenderness.

He took it away, turned it loose in the guard room; but it was tame to me alone, and sought a hiding place. It had fled to my prison door; and at the hour of visitation, ran into my dungeon, immediately testifying its joy by its antic leaping between my legs. It is worthy of remark that it had been taken away blind-folded, that is to say, wrapped up in a handkerchief. The guard room was a hundred paces from my dungeon. How then did it find its master? Did it know, or did it wait for the hour of visitation? Had it remarked the doors were daily opened?

All were desirous of obtaining this mouse; but the major carried it off for the lady; she put it into a cage, where it pined, refused all sustenance, and in a few days was found dead.

The loss of this little companion made me for some time quite melancholy; yet, on the last examination, I perceived it had eaten away the bread, by which I had concealed the crevices I had made in cutting the floor, so that the examiners must all be blind not to discover them. I was convinced my faithful little friend had fallen a necessary victim to its master's safety. My keepers were persuaded I had neither the will nor the power to make further attempts at freedom. This accident, however, determined me not to wait even the three months.

I have already related that horses were kept ready on the 1st and 15th, and I only suffered the 1st of August to pass, because I would not injure the worthy Major Psuhl, who had treated me with more compassion than his comrades, and whose day of visitation it was. On the 15th I determined to fly. This resolution formed, I waited in anxious expectation, when a new and most remarkable succession of events happened.

An alarm of fire had obliged the major of the day to repair in haste to the town; he therefore committed the keys to the lieutenant. The latter coming to visit me, with a look of compassion, asked, "Dear Trenck, have you never, during the seven years that you have been under the guard of the militia, found a man like Schell?" "Alas! sir," answered I, "such friends are, indeed, rare; the will of many has been good: each knew I could make his fortune, but none had courage enough for so desperate an attempt. Money I have distributed freely, but have received little help."

"Money! How do you obtain money in this dungeon?" "From a secret correspondent in Vienna, by whom I am still supplied. If I can serve you, command me; I will do it willingly, without asking any return." So saying, I immediately took fifty ducats from between the panels, and gave them to the lieutenant. At first he refused, but at length accepted them with fear. He left me, promised to return, pretended to shut the door, and kept his word. He now avowed debt obliged him to desert; that this had long been his determination, and that, could he assist me, only to show him how this might be effected.

We continued two hours in conference; a plan was soon formed and approved, almost a certainty of success demonstrated, especially when I told him I had two horses in waiting. We vowed eternal friendship, I gave him fifty additional ducats, and he had never before been so rich; his whole debts, which would oblige him to desert, not amounting to more than two hundred rix dollars, which, however, he could never have discharged out of his pay.

He was to prepare four keys, that were to resemble those of my dungeon; the latter were to be exchanged on the day of flight, being kept in the guard room, while the major was with General Walrabe. He was to give the grenadiers on guard leave of absence for some hours, or send them into town on various pretences. The sentinels at the gate he was to call from their duty, and those placed over me were to be sent into my dungeon to take away my bed; while encumbered with this, I

was to spring out, and lock them in; after which we were to mount our horses, kept ready, and ride full speed to Gummern. Every thing was to be prepared within a week, when he was again to mount guard. We had scarcely fully formed our project before the sentinels called, the major was coming; he accordingly hastily barred up the doors, and the major passed to Gen. Walrabe.

No man now was happier than myself; in a dungeon though I was, my hopes of escape were triple; the mediation at Berlin, the mine I had made, and my new friend, the lieutenant. Intoxicated with hope and joy, then, when most my mind ought to have been cool and clear, I seemed to have lost my understanding. I came to a resolution which will appear to every reasonable man, extravagant, absurd, pitiable. I was vain enough, stupid enough, mad enough, to form the design of casting myself on the generosity and magnanimity of the great Frederick! Should this fail, I still thought my lieutenant a certain savior.

Having beated my imagination with this lamentable scheme, I expected the hour of visitation with anxiety. The major entered; I spoke to him thus:

"I know, sir, the great Prince Ferdinand is again in Magdebourg." (My new friend had told me this.) "Be pleased to inform him that he may first examine my prison, double the sentinels, and after give me his commands, stating at what hour it will please him I should make my appearance, in perfect freedom, on the glais of Klotserbergen. If I prove myself capable of this, I then hope for the protection of Prince Ferdinand, and that he will relate my proceeding to the king, who may thereby be convinced of my innocence, and the perfect clearness of my conscience."

The major was astonished — supposed my brain turned. The proposal he held to be ridiculous, and the performance impossible. I, however, persisted; he rode to town, and returned with the sub-governor, Reichman, the town major, Reding; and the major of inspection. The answer that they delivered was: That the prince promised me his protection, the king's favor, and a

certain release from my chains, should I prove the truth of my assertion. I requested they would appoint a time; they ridiculed the thing as impossible, and at last said that it would be sufficient, could I prove the practicability of such a scheme; but should I refuse, they would immediately break up the whole flooring, and place sentinels in my dungeon night and day; adding, the governor would not admit of any actual breaking out.

After the most solemn promises of good faith, I immediately disencumbered myself of my chains, raised up the flooring, gave them my arms and implements, and also two keys that my friend had procured me to the doors of the subterranean gallery. This gallery I desired them to enter, and sound with their sword hilts the place through which I was to break, which might be done in a few minutes. I further described the road I was to take through the gallery, informed them that two of the doors had not been shut for six months, and to the others they had already the keys; adding, I had horses at the glacis that would be immediately ready; the stables for which were unknown to them.

They went, examined, returned, put questions, which I answered with as much precision as the engineer could have done who built the Star Fort. They left me with seeming friendship, continued away about an hour, came back, told me the prince was astonished at what he had heard, that he wished me all happiness, and then took me, unfettered, to the guard house. The major came in the evening, treated us with a sumptuous supper, assured me that every thing would happen to my wishes, and that Prince Ferdinand had already written to Berlin.

The guard was reinforced next day; two grenadiers entered the officers' room as sentinels. The whole guard loaded with ball before my eyes, the draw bridges were raised in open day, and precautions were taken, as if it were supposed I intended to make attempts as desperate as those I had made at Glatz.

I now saw numerous workmen employed on my dungeon, and carts bringing quarry stones. The officers on guard behaved with great kindness, kept a good table, at which I ate; but two sentinels and an under officer never quitted the guard room

Conversation was very cautious, and this continued five or six days; at length it was my new friend, the lieutenant's turn to mount guard; he appeared to me as friendly as formerly, but conference was difficult; he, however, found an opportunity to express his astonishment at my ill-timed discovery, told me the prince knew nothing of the affair, and that the report propagated through the garrison was, I had been surprised in making a new attempt.

I now saw my error, but alas! too late. I assured my friend this step had been occasioned by my reliance on his promise. He lamented my mistake, but affirmed himself still the same. My courage strengthened, and I avowed vengeance against the mean conduct of the sub-governor.

My dungeon was completed in about a week. The town major and major of the day reconducted me to it. My feet only was chained to the wall, but with links twice as strong as formerly; the remainder of my irons were never after added. Instead of flooring, my dungeon was paved with huge flag stones. The prison was made impenetrable. That part of my money only was saved, which I had concealed in the panels of the door and the chimney of the stove; some louis d'ors hidden about my clothes, were taken from me.

While the smith was riveting my chains, I addressed myself to the sub-governor: "Is this the consequence of the pledged honor of the prince? Has the magnanimity of my conduct deserved this treatment? But think not you deceive me, I am acquainted with the false report that has been spread: the truth will soon come to light, and the unworthy put to shame. Nay, I now foretell you, Trenck shall not be much longer in your power; for were you to build your dungeon of steel, it would still be insufficient to contain me."

They smiled at my threats. Reichman, however, desired me to take courage, and said I might probably soon obtain my freedom after a proper manner. My firm reliance on my friend, the lieutenant, gave me, instead of appearing sunken and despondent, a degree of confidence that amazed them all.

It is here necessary farther to explain this affair. When I had obtained my liberty, I paid a visit to Prince Eerdinand at Brunswick. He informed me the majors had not made a true report, being afraid of a reprimand for their own carelessness. Their story was, they had caught me at work, and had it not been for their extreme diligence, I should certainly have made my escape. Prince Ferdinand heard the truth some time after, and informed the king, who, from that time, only waited a favorable opportunity to restore me to my liberty.

Such is the way of the world! Such the manner in which the most generous, the most noble acts are often painted. I was in this case, the silly sacrifice of my own vanity. Those who guarded me were ashamed of their neglect, and to avoid reprimand, which would not effectually have injured any of them, was I again led to my slaughter-house. Such has been the issue through life of many undertakings; where others have taken advantage of the too great openness of my heart, and procured reward to themselves by my labors.

Once more was I immured, causing in my heart the cruelties of kings and governors; this time, however, they were innocent, because deceived.

I waited in anxious hope for the day when my deliverer was to mount guard. What again was my despair, when, instead of him, I saw another lieutenant. I buoyed myself up with the expectation that accident was the occasion of this; but I remained three weeks in the same suspense, and saw him no more. Ask I durst not, but heard, at length, he had left the corps of grenadiers, and therefore was no longer to mount guard at the Star Fort. I bitterly now repented my folly, and untimely vanity; melancholy seized my mind; when I had removed every impediment, the confidence I placed in the honor of man plunged me near six months longer in affliction, doubled by despair. I had, myself, rendered my dungeon impenetrable. Death would have followed, but for the dependence I had placed in the court of Vienna.

The officers soon remarked the loss of my accustomed fortitude,

and my gloomy thoughtfulness. I was less industrious on my cups; the verses I wrote were desponding. The only comfort they could give was patience, dear Trenck, your condition can not be worse; the king may not live forever. Small consolation this. Were I sick, they told me I then might hope my sufferings would soon have an end. If I recovered, they pitied me, and lamented their continuance. What man of my rank and expectations ever endured what I have endured, ever was treated as I have been treated?

Peace had been concluded nine months. I was forgotten. At last, however, when I supposed all hope lost, the 24th of December, and the day of freedom came! At the hour of parade, Count Schlieffen, lieutenant of the guards, arrived, and brought orders for my release! The sub-governor supposed me weaker in intellect than I really was, and would not too suddenly tell me these happy tidings. He knew not the presence of mind, the fortitude, which the various dangers I had seen, had made habitual. Self praise offends; yet, never was I too much elated in prosperity, or depressed in adversity; never timid; or undetermined in the moment of danger; and for the truth of this, I appeal to all who have known me personally, or been acquainted with those who have seen me in such situations.

My doors, for the last time, resounded! Several people entered; their countenances were more than usually cheerful, and the sub-governor at their head, and at length said: "This time, dear Trenck, I am the joyful messenger of good news. Prince Fardissand has prevailed on the king to let your arms be taken off. Accordingly to work went the smith; "I am free," then, said I, "and you are afraid to tell me too suddenly. Speak, fear not, I can moderate my transports."

For some weeks after I first obtained my freedom, I was generally absent in mind, and deep in thought. This was a habit I acquired in prison, and the objects of sight appeared but as the visions of sleep. I often stopped in the streets, stared round me, doubted my own existence, and bit my finger, in order to convince myself I was really awake and alive.

How trifling, how insignificant does the poor pageantry of greatness appear to me at this time! A thousand people, variously bedecked in all their finery, wait the appearance of some extraordinary personage! the doors are thrown open! An elderly matron enters, graciously smiles, and every body most humbly smiles also! She asks a few questions concerning the wind and weather, of an old priest in a red cap and stockings, then addresses herself to an insignificant Æsop, on whom all eagerly press forward to fawn! The good lady retires, and the hubbub of the synagogue ensues! and this is called a levee! Not to this sublime honor may men of honest hearts, the friends of virtue or their country, find admittance; they have not the proper key, or having it, hold it in contempt. O man! what art thou when called great and honorable? what are thy thoughts, what thy dreams! Dost thou call thyself a man of reason, a philosopher? What dost thou then at courts? By me they have long been avoided. ~~Walking round the ramparts of Vienna,~~ having recovered from sickness, the vivifying spring, and the broad expanse of Heaven, inspired a consciousness of present freedom, and pleasure indescribable. I heard the morning song of the lark. My heart palpitated, my pulse quickened, the blood trickled through my veins with delight, for I was a man, and recollected I was not in chains. Happen, said I, what may, I fear not futurity, so long as my feet, my will, and my heart are free, and like yonder lark I can remove from land to land. My soul poured forth its thankfulness for this consciousness of freedom, and I determined to fly Vienna, and seek some corner of the world where virtue has nothing to fear from the tongues of slanderers, the commands of courts, or the arbitrary will of monarchs.

If I went into any large companies, their prattle so distracted my mind; and the lights so overpowered my eyes, that I returned home with headache, lassitude and melancholy.

An accident happened which furthered my project. ~~Marshal Laudohn~~ was going to Aix-la-Chapelle, to take the waters. I had always personally honored and loved this general, when he

was only a captain of pandours in my cousin's regiment. He went to take his leave of the countess Paar. I was present. The empress entered the chamber, and, the conversation turning on Laudohn's journey, she said to me, "The baths are also necessary to the reestablishment of your health, Trenck." I was ready, and followed him in two days, where we remained about three months.

Here we were stared at as strange animals. All the world wished to see him, because of his fame in war; and me, because of my fame in suffering. The society of this worthy general poured balm into my wounded soul. He was as well acquainted with Vienna as myself; his fortitude and magnanimity had conquered his enemies. What he was, he had made himself.

The mode of life at Aix-la-Chapelle and Spa pleased me, where men of all nations meet, and where princes are obliged to mingle with persons of all ranks, if they wish to seek conversation, and would not renounce society. One day here procured me more pleasure, esteem and solid friendship, than a whole life in Vienna. This friendly counsel was seconded by my own wishes. I returned to Aix-la-Chapelle in December, 1765, and married the youngest daughter of the former burgomaster de Broe.

From the year 1775 to 1777, I chiefly spent my time in journeying through England and France. I was intimate with Dr. Franklia, the American minister; also with the counts St. Germain and Vergennes, who made me advantageous proposals to go to America; but I was prevented accepting them by my affection for my wife and children.

Being in London, I was defrauded of 1800 guineas by a swindler. The relating of this story will do but little honor to the English nation. The fault was principally my brother-in-law's, a young man who parted with the wine before he had received the money. In England there is no law against such deceivers. They bid you trust nobody, you will then not be wronged. And when I had been wronged and asked my friends' assistance, I was only laughed at; as if they were happy an

5
1785
1726 BORR
39

Hagliburn had the wit to cheat a German. I can not give a circumstantial history of this affair, but it is necessary to narrate it in the abstract, our prejudices being so strong in favor of the great worth and justness of the British nation.

Finding myself defrauded of my wine, I hastened to Sir John Fielding. He was acquainted with me, told me he knew I had been swindled, and that his friendship would make him active in my behalf; that he also knew the houses where my wine was deposited, and that a party of the runners should go with me, sufficiently strong for its recovery. I was little aware that he had, at that time, two hundred bottles of my best Tokay in his cellar; that he was in partnership with robbers, only the stupid among whom he hung, and preserved the most adroit for the promotion of trade.

He sent a constable and six of his runners with me, commanding them to act under my orders. By good fortune I had a violent headache, and could not attend them myself, but sent my brother-in-law, who spoke better English than I. Him they brought to the house of a Jew, who told him, "Your wine, sir, is here concealed." Though it was broad day, the door was locked, that he might be induced to act illegally. The constable desired him to break the door open, which he accordingly did; the Jews, in a pretended fright, came running, and asked, "what do you want, gentlemen?" "I want my wine," answered my brother. "Take what is your own," replied a Jew, "but beware of touching my property, I have bought the wine." My brother attended the constable and runners into a cellar, and there found a great part of my wine. He wrote to Sir John Fielding that he had found the wine, and desired to know how he was to act. Fielding by a verbal message answered, "It must be taken by the owner." My brother accordingly got a cart, and sent for the wine. He attended the runners, likewise, to the house of another Jew, where they proceeded as before, and he came back quite rejoiced at having recovered the wine.

Next day came a constable with a warrant, saying, "he wanted to speak with my brother, and that it was to go to my

friend, Sir John Fielding." When he was in the street, he touched him with his staff, and told him, "Sir, you are my prisoner." Here it must be remarked, that no man can be arrested in his own house in London; but that, when in the street, and the constable has touched him with his staff, he is beyond delivery, and if he should run, would be stopped by the people.

All this I was a spectator of through the window, unable to give any assistance. I went however to Sir John Fielding and asked what it all meant? This upright justice answered, in a magisterial tone, that my brother had been accused of felony. The Jews and swindlers had sworn the wine was a legal purchase. If I had not taken care to be paid, or was ignorant of the English laws, that was my fault. Six swindlers had sworn the wine was paid for; which circumstance he had not known, or he should not have granted me a warrant. My brother had also broken open doors, and forcibly taken away wine which was not his own. They had legally made oath of this, and he was charged with burglary and robbery. He further desired me immediately to give bail, in a thousand guineas, for my brother, for his appearance at the court of King's Bench, otherwise his trial would immediately come on, and in a few days he would be hanged.

What was my rage at finding myself thus treated! And how willingly would I have plunged my sword in the breast of a man so vile as this chief magistrate of London. I hastened to my wine merchants, who had stock in hand of wine, worth upwards of a thousand guineas. They gave bail for my brother, and in four days he was released.

Fielding, in the interim, sent his runners to my house, took back the wine, and restored it to the Jews, as property of which they had been robbed. They threatend further to prosecute me as a receiver of stolen goods. I fled, in all haste from London, through Dover, to Paris, where I immediately sold off my remaining stock at half price, honored my bills, and so ended my merchandise.

My brother returned to London in November, to defend his

02/09/18

cause in the court of King's Bench, but the swindlers had disappeared, and the lawyer required a hundred pounds to proceed. The conclusion of all this, was, my brother returned with seventy pounds less in his pocket, spent as traveling expenses; and the stock, in the hands of my wine merchants, was detained on pretence of paying the bail. They also brought me in an apothecaries' bill, and all was lost. Thus do the English treat the Germans, notwithstanding I had so many friends in London.

I arrived on the 4th of April at Konigsberg, where my brother impatiently awaited my arrival. We embraced as brothers must, after an absence of two and forty years. Of all the brothers I had left in this city, he only remained. He lived a retired and peaceable life on his own estates, fulfilling all the duties of a man. He had no children living. I continued a fortnight in company with him and his worthy wife, at Konigsberg, with infinite satisfaction of heart, and afterwards went with him to his country seat, where I staid six weeks.

Joyfully do I now journey to the shores of death. My duty fulfilled, my end attained, tranquility deserved. My conscience is void of reproach, posterity shall bless my memory, and only the unfeeling, the wicked, the confessor of princes, and the pious impostor, shall vent their rage against my writings. My few remaining hours of life shall be dedicated to the love of men. For my own part, my wants are few. My mind is desirous of repose, and should this be denied me, still I will not murmur. I now wish to steal gently, though not wholly unknown, toward that last asylum, whither, in my youth, if thither I went, it must be with colors flying. Grant, Almighty God, that the prayer I this day make may be heard; and that such may be the conclusion of my eventful life.

CONCLUSION.

I have, at this moment, occasion to add, now when this volume is completed, that I was received with esteem and honor in my own country, superior to all that can be imagined by those who have not themselves been witness of the reception. Content and happy, I journey back to Austria. The good king has done me justice, and heaped favors on me; I have received my confiscated estates, and am in hourly expectation of the rents of which I have for years been deprived. More I sought not. A post of honor I can not there accept. Nobody shall accuse me in my old age of being selfish, or living detrimental to that state of which I have been six and thirty years a subject, although it has shamefully mistreated me, and continues still to repay me with ingratitude. I leave behind me a gracious monarch, who knows my heart; I leave the best of reputations, innocence undoubted, and am convinced the Prussians love me, and will be the friends of my children.

The object of my journey is accomplished; I can now, in the decline of life, enjoy honor and ease, as a good man should, and can meet death with a smile.

02/08/2018
Jm

CPSIA information can be obtained
at www.ICGtesting.com
Printed in the USA
LVOW10*0215160118

563055LV00017B/109/P



This work has been selected by scholars as being culturally important, and is part of the knowledge base of civilization as we know it. This work was reproduced from the original artifact, and remains as true to the original work as possible. Therefore, you will see the original copyright references, library stamps (as most of these works have been housed in our most important libraries around the world), and other notations in the



This work is in the public domain in the United States of America, and possibly other nations. Within the United States, you may freely copy and distribute this work, as no entity (individual or corporate) has a copyright on the body of the work.

As a reproduction of a historical artifact, this work may contain missing or blurred pages, poor pictures, errant marks, etc. Scholars believe, and we concur, that this work is important enough to be preserved, reproduced, and made generally available to the public. We appreciate your support of the preservation process, and thank you for being an important part of keeping this knowledge alive and relevant.

